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A CONVENTION,

THE

ONLY MEANS

OF

SAVING US FROM RUIN.

IN A

LETTER,

ADDRESSED TO THE

PEOPLE OF ENGLAND,

By JOSEPH GERRALD.

NOW LANGUISHING IN EXILE FROM HIS NATIVE COUNTRY.

A NEW EDITION.

If a long train of abuſes, peculations, and artifices, all tending the ſame way, make the deſign viſible to the *people*, and they cannot but feel what they lie under, and ſee whether they are going; it is not to be wondered, that they ſhould then rouſe themſelves, *and endeavour to put the rule into ſuch hands, which may ſecure to them the ends for which Government was at firſt erected.*

LOCKE ON CIVIL GOVERNMENT, B. II. C. 19.

LONDON:

1796.

Price 1s. 6d.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A

CONVENTION, &c.

FRIENDS AND CITIZENS,

WAR is again broken out. From the Streights of Gibraltar to the bottom of the Baltic all Europe is involved in military operations. The plough is abandoned, and the loom ſtands ſtill; fleets are equipped and armies levied, to diſturb peaceful communities, and to lay waſte the earth.

War, though declared by the government, muſt be ſupported by the people. Parliament impoſes taxes, but *you* pay them. The king declares war, but it is the blood of the peaſant and the manufacturer which flows in the battle, it is the purſe of the tradeſman and artificer which is emptied in the conteſt.

If ſuch are the awful and tremendous conſequences of that ſtate which now ſubſiſts between France and England, it is ſurely our duty, as good men and uſeful citizens, ſeriouſly to conſider, what is the object for which we are fighting, and on what principle of juſtice we can engage in the conflict. If the life of one man is not to be taken away, but upon a principle of ſelf-defence, or on the previous conviction of his guilt by a calm and ſober appeal to reaſon, how much more does it become us, ſcrupulouſly to weigh, in *the balance of the ſanctuary*, the cauſes for which we embark in a complicated war, in which the kindred blood of thouſands of our fellow creatures is poured out, like water, by the unfeeling arm of a mercenary ſoldiery, and millions muſt be ſquandered, which are wrung from the ſweat of the brow of the huſbandman.

What have I to do with politics? Nothing. From this important queſtion, my countrymen, ſo weakly and wickedly anſwered, have ariſen all the evils which have afflicted England through a long ſucceſſion of ages. This is the fountain, from which not only waters of bitterneſs, but rivers of blood have flowed.—Did you ever doubt what connection you had with morals and virtue? And yet, what are politics, but that wide ſyſtem of duties which nation owes to nation? Politics are to nations what morals are to individuals. They have lately, indeed, been called the principle branch of morals. I think they are more. I hold them to be the great trunk of morals, on which all other duties depend but as branches. It is only upon a ſtrict performance of theſe duties, that you can expect to be proſperous and happy as a people. Now as war can only be juſt on one ſide of the parties which carry it on, it muſt be murder on the other. The good or evil qualities of all actions depend not on the number or dignity of the agents, but on their tendency to promote the good of mankind. By this ſtandard muſt equally be tried the actions of the peaſant and the prince. In the guilt or innocence of the preſent war, as we all contribute to carry it on, either by perſonal ſervice or the taxes which we pay, the declaration of war on the part of the King has deeply involved us. We are bound therefore, as moral and accountable agents, to examine the juſtice of the meaſure; the means

of information are at hand; and let me aſſure you, that where Knowledge is a duty, Ignorance is a crime. To the ſervile adulation of Court Sycophants on the one hand, or the clamorous howl of Oppoſition on the other, I pay little heed. Thoſe juggling confederacies have too long and too ſucceſsfully deluded the nation. Pitt ſucceeds North, Fox ſucceeds Pitt, and Pitt ſucceeds Fox again; but the national grievances remain unredreſſed, and the change of a miniſter produces nothing but a transfer of penſions from one minion to another, and a freſh accumulation of national burthens. Parties are only a ſucceſſion of birds of prey, of which the people are the banquet. Confide therefore in neither. The means of your ſecurity are in your own hands, and it remains for you alone to exert them. If your life were menaced by aſſault, would it not be ridiculous to apply to your neighbour to diſcharge your muſket for you?

To put my mind at eaſe, I determined to ſit down and examine coolly the grievances of the people, and the proper remedy to apply, without borrowing my opinion either from the advocates or defamers of Government. The reſult of that examination is here ſubmitted to you. In ſubmitting it, however, I would wiſh to obviate an objection, to which this attempt may, at firſt, ſeem liable.

Some will cenſure it as indecent; for what can be more indecent, it may be ſaid, than for a private man to paſs judgment on the acts of the Legiſlature? In anſwer to the charge of indecency, I would aſk, whether it be indecent to examine, or to reflect? Now the man who reflects at all, muſt either approve, or diſapprove, or ſuſpend his judgment. If he approves, it is becauſe the thing approved of is conformable to his own ideas:—if he diſapproves, it is becauſe it is repugnant to his own ideas; if he keeps himſelf in ſuſpenſe, it is becauſe it is partly conformable, and partly repugnant. There appears to me to be no more indecency in one of theſe operations than in another. Of deceaſed Parliaments it was always allowed to ſpeak freely. In Egypt, a deſpotic government, it was even ordained to examine and to cenſure the conduct of dead ſovereigns; and the cuſtom of pronouncing orations at the embalming of their kings, was eſtabliſhed as the means of inciting their reigning prince to reform the errors, ſupply the defects, and accompliſh the good deſigns of his predeceſſor.

In this country, which ſome are pleaſed to call *free*, though not pleaſed, we find, with the only means by which it can be kept ſo, though we may arraign the dead, we muſt flatter the living. We may diſturb with impunity the aſhes of our forefathers, but living evil has a claim to our reſpect. We are bound, it ſeems, to embrace the hands which buffet, and to kiſs the feet that trample on us. The reverſe of this conduct is undoubtedly proper. They who repoſe in the ſanctuary of the grave, as they have ceaſed to injure, may be ſpared from reproach. But the living ſervants of the people, who make laws, by which not only property, but life itſelf may be forfeited, are certainly amenable to the tribunal of their employers; and when it is fair to examine, it may be proper to cenſure.

My motive for publiſhing is to do good—unconnected with any party; too proud to be dependent on any, I write but as I feel,

Truth can only be offenſive to him, whoſe conduct will not bear the teſt of examination.

In a word, if there are any perſons in the legiſlature to whom this work may give offence, let them recollect, that being ſervants of the people, it is their duty to render an account of their conduct to that people from whom they derive their power, and for whoſe benefit alone they were entruſted with the exerciſe of it; let them recollect that puniſhment is not guilt, and that calumny is not infamy; that if to acquire truth is a bleſſing, to propagate it is a duty;—that the office of reaſon is to convince, and not to flatter, and, that the only effectual mode of making mankind ſpeak good of them, is to do it.

FRIENDS AND CITIZENS,

Hear now my reaſonings, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.—If we look back to the wars which have deſolated Europe for theſe laſt hundred years, theſe three melancholy truths muſt ſtrike even the moſt careleſs obſerver; that they might have been avoided by negociation, inſtead of being decided by arms; that they aroſe not from the jarring intereſts of the people, but from the ambition and avarice of courts, and, that at the end of each war, the ſituation of the people was always much worſe than at the beginning of it.

The war which preceded the peace of Ryſwick was undertaken to make France acknowledge King William, and to recover Hudſon's Bay.—How was this effected? After ten years fighting, (ſays Swift)† after the loſs of a hundred thouſand men, and a debt remaining of twenty millions, we at length liſtened to the terms of peace, which was concluded with great advantage to the Empire and Holland, but none at all to us. During that war, in conſequence of large exports of corn to the continent, *to feed our Dutch and German allies*; in England it was double, and in Scotland four times its uſual price, and in one of thoſe years, in Scotland alone *eighty thouſand poor people died of want*‡. With reſpect to the firſt cauſe of the war, I cannot but obſerve, that wretched indeed muſt be the condition of that country where nine millions of inhabitants muſt be expoſed to butchery and beggary, in order to procure a title for one man, upon whom as upon a mendicant, they conferred the crown of theſe realms, and an immenſe income, as alms, to ſupport it. Ireland was made an Aceldama, a field of blood, fifty thouſand brave men were driven into a foreign ſervice to turn their ſwords againſt the boſom of their parent country, and forfeited lands, which amounted in value to the enormous ſum *of three millions three hundred thouſand pounds*, were wreſted from the native inhabitants, while their innocent poſterity were deprived of their inheritances by that bitter and cruel relic of feudal tyranny, the law of forfeiture, and were made partakers in the ſufferings, though they had never been partakers in the guilt of their forefathers. To what purpoſes was this

† Conduct of the Allies.

‡ Dalrymple's Memoirs of Great-Britain and Ireland, Part iii. book 5.

immenſe property applied? To lighten the burden of taxes, or to proſecute the war? Far from it.—The Counteſs of Orkney, the ſtrumpet of William, alone received a grant of three and twenty thouſand pounds a year, † and the remainder was parcelled out among his Dutch minions and paraſites, among the Van Keppels, the Naſſaus, and Zuyleſteins, the Van Bentincks, and a countleſs tribe of court panders, whoſe barbarous appellations the tongues of Engliſhmen could with difficulty pronounce. The ſpirit with which we engaged in that war, ſays Bolingbroke, was raſh, preſumptuous and ignorant, ill conducted at home, and ill ſeconded abroad. *But they who governed were glad to engage us at any rate* ‡.

Forcible expreſſions! and admirably adapted to deſcribe the conduct of thoſe who have precipitated us into the preſent mad and deſperate conteſt.

The blood of the people had ſcarcely ceaſed to flow, when the ſhort peace, which, in fact, was nothing more than a ſullen pauſe from arms, was again diſturbed upon cauſes equally futile, and for purpoſes equally deſtructive. James the Second dying at Saint Germain's, Lewis the Fouteenth, out of complaiſance to his miſtreſs, proclaimed his ſon King of Kingland. Our wiſe anceſtors, the Whigs of thoſe days, of whoſe patriotiſm, as of the patriotiſm of the preſent Whigs, we hear ſo much, and feel ſo little, generouſly mortgaged the revenues of their poſterity to ſupport the title of the diſintereſted Dutchman, and the nation again flew to arms. Voltaire § informs us, that many eminent perſons who lived at that period, aſſured him, that we ſhould never have embarked in the war had it not been for the indignity offered to the king. The French monarch by the late peace had bound himſelf only, not to diſturb King William *in his poſſeſſion*, and as for the mere acknowledgement of the *title*, Lewis had as good cauſe to complain of William, as William had reaſon to complain of Lewis; for William had, formerly, been crowned King of France, though it had never been reſented by Lewis as a ground of hoſtility. Yet here again was a reaſon for ſpilling the blood, and draining the treaſures, of thoſe great nations. I need not be told, that this war was undertaken, to prevent the Spaniſh monarchy from paſſing into the houſe of Bourbon. In the firſt place, William had, by a letter under his own hand, acknowledged the Duke of Anjou, a French prince, and the grandſon of Lewis, to be the lawful ſovereign of Spain. The Dutch, who were *then*, as they are *now*, our very uſeful and active allies, had alſo recognized his title. Yet only ſix months had elapſed, (ſuch is ſometimes the faith of crowned heads!) when William formed alliances to dethrone the very prince, whom he had ſo recently acknowledged, and to ſupport his competitor with the blood of his ſubjects. What then was the pretext for the war? TO GIVE A KING TO ANOTHER PEOPLE. To interfere in the internal government of another country, in order to prevent the people from chooſing, not on-

† Macpherſon's Hiſt. of Great-Britain. Vol. I.
‡ Letters on the State of Europe. § Siecle de Louis quatorze.

ly thoſe whom they think proper to govern them, but alſo *in what manner the people ſhall be governed*, is a tyranny as inſulting to their feelings, as it is deſtructive of their rights. The kingdom of Spain was to be parcelled out, not as the Spaniards themſelves ſhould think proper, but as it ſhould ſuit the ambition or caprice of their neighbours. Spain was to be robbed of her territory, and to effect this felonious partition, did a King of England combine with an Emperor of Germany, and other continental deſpots. For this did he ſubſidize a King of Sardinia and other petty tyrants, who feed on the blood of the ſubjects, whom they let out for ſlaughter. This war, Friends and Citizens, is an awful, but, I hope, not uſeleſs example of the inefficacy of foreign force, to fix upon a great and reſpectable people, a *King* whom they abhor. Though our armies had been twice at Madrid, the capital of Spain, as Paris is of France, yet this temporary ſucceſs ſerved only more firmly to rivet the hatred of the Spaniards for the myrmidons who invaded them. "Armies," ſaid Stanhope, who lived in thoſe times, "may walk "about that country till Doomſday, but they will walk about it "without effect." The war terminated, as all ſimilar wars, no doubt, will terminate, in an acknowledgement, on the part of the combined powers, of that very government, for which the natives had contended, and in the diſcomfiture and diſgrace of the invading armies. But the evil ended not here. *One hundred and fifty thouſand lives were ſacrificed, and thirty millions of debt were added to our burthens.* "We haſtily engaged in a war, "ſays Swift †, "which coſt us ſixty millions, and, after a repeated, as well as un- "expected ſucceſs in arms, *has put us and our poſterity in a worſe* "*condition*, not only than any of our allies, but even than our con- "quered enemies themſelves."—If ſuch are the fruits of ſucceſs, what muſt be the conſequence of diſaſter!

Soon after the elevation of the houſe of Hanover to the throne of England, George the Firſt purchaſed the two German duchies of Bremen and Verden. This purchaſe produced a Spaniſh war, expoſed the country to all the horrors of an invaſion from the brutal ferocity of Charles the Twelfth, and the reſtleſs machinations of Alberoni; and, even when the black cloud was diſpelled, loaded the nation with the expence of ſending a ſquadron, for ſix years, into the Baltic. In plain Engliſh, the King thought proper to purchaſe a German eſtate with a bad title, and the people of England were compelled to pay for it.

The Spaniſh war of 1739 was the next ſcene of blood in which we were involved. The object of this war was to procure a free navigation for Engliſh ſubjects in the American ſeas. In the year 1741, we were graciouſly favoured with the filliance of Auſtria, who was ſubſidized, as Sardinia is at preſent, to fight her own battles. In conſequence of this meaſure, France was added to the number of our enemies. Like chivalrous knights, we engaged for the ſuccour

† Conduct of the Allies.

of that diſtreſſed damſel the Empreſs Queen of Hungary; and engaged with ſuch a ſpirit of romantic folly † as to abandon the original object of the war, the encreaſe and protection of our commerce, to preſerve the dominions of the Elector of Hanover, and to fix the Imperial crown upon the head of a princeſs of the houſe of Auſtria. Thus the blood of Britiſh ſubjects was again poured out, to maintain the Pragmatic Sanction, to preſerve the balance of power, and to enable us to talk that cabaliſtical jargon, which, while it aſſails the ears, neither informs the underſtanding, nor improves the condition of Engliſhmen. Balance of power, Fellow Citizens, means nothing more than to extend the dominions, and encreaſe the revenues of kings; for when did war meliorate the ſituation of the people? Like the aſs in the fable between the two armies, they are ſuffered to crop the thiſtles for their food, and muſt not expect an alteration of the ſyſtem, but a change of maſters. At the concluſion of the war, they are transferred like cattle, to the victorious freebooter, and are permitted to graze upon the ſcanty pittance, which the ravages of war have left them.

But the *continent* of Europe was not the only theatre of human wretchedneſs. A civil war was excited in the heart of the kingdom, of which the flames were extinguiſhed by copious torrents of the blood of Britons. The battle of Culloden, which fixed the houſe of Hanover on the throne of Great Britain, was only a prelude to ſcenes ſtill more bloody and diſtreſsful. The Duke of Cumberland advanced with the army into the Highlands, and ſent off detachments on all hands, to hunt down the fugitives, and lay waſte the country with fire and ſword. The caſtles were plundered, or burned. Every houſe, hut, or habitation, met with the ſame fate, without diſtinction. All the cattle and proviſions were carried off. The men were either ſhot upon the mountains, like wild beaſts, or put to death in cold blood, without form of trial. The women, after having ſeen their huſbands and fathers murdered, were ſubjected to brutal violation, and then turned out naked, with their children, to ſtarve upon the barren heath. The miniſters of vengeance were ſo alert in the execution of their office, that, in a few days, there was neither houſe, cottage, man nor beaſt, to be ſeen within the compaſs of fifty miles. All was ruin, ſilence, and deſolation!

But though the ſword of military execution was glutted with blood, other actors were to be introduced in the cataſtrophe of the piece, to drop the curtain upon the cloſe of a tragedy, which thoſe, *who in the trade of death had ſlain men*, had merely begun. The ſcaffold reddened with the judicial ſlaughter of the victims of offended majeſty; and the palpitating entrails of your fellow crea-

† We are ſo declared in our oppoſition to French power, and ſo alert in defence of our allies, that they always reckon upon our force, as upon their own; and, expecting to carry on war at our expence, refuſe all reaſonable terms of accommodation. All the world knows, that the factious vote of the houſe of commons in the beginning of the ſeſſion, made the Queen of Hungary inflexible in her terms.

tures were torn out, and exhibited to the eyes of Engliſhmen, by the hands of the hangman, as a terror to diſloyalty. Baniſhments, attainders, confiſcations followed in the rear of corporal puniſhments, the innocent were confounded with the guilty, and the cup of calamity was filled up to the very brim. Such are the effects of thoſe laws which ſome men call mild, and ſuch the bleſſings of a conteſted ſucceſſion!

What then did England gain by this war? The right of Engliſh ſubjects to navigate in the American ſeas, without being ſubject to ſearch, was not once mentioned in the treaty of peace, *though the claim was the original ſource of the differences between Great Britain and Spain.* What did ſhe loſe? Much blood and treaſure; diſgrace upon diſgrace; an additional load of grievous impoſitions; and the national debt accumulated to the enormous ſum of eighty millions *.

The war which followed began in 1756. A diſpute concerning a tract of land on the back parts of America, was the ſpark which lighted up the flame of contention. The charge of encroachment was preferred on our part againſt the French, and as firmly retaliated by them. To criminate and recriminate has never been the road to reconciliation; nor was it ſo on this occaſion. Had the parties intereſted alone been conſulted, a jury of twelve men might have decided the conteſt. But unhappily for mankind, deliberate reaſoning has never been the weapon of Kings. They are great logicians, who reaſon only by the ſtroke of the ſabre. It would be tedious and diſguſting, Fellow Citizens, to enter again upon an accurate enumeration of all thoſe calamities which ſucceſſively deſolated the four quarters of the globe, and which, though they began on the lakes of Canada, were extended to the banks of the Ganges. In the ſingle expedition to the Havannah, of the fourteen thouſand land forces who aſſembled at the beginning of the ſiege, only ſeven hundred and fifty were able to do duty upon the reduction of the citadel‡. In Europe, the very elements, as if indignant of the cruel ravages of man, ſeemed to conſpire to puniſh his wickedneſs. A winter, remarkable for its ſeverity, ſucceeded the bloody campaign of 1759. In Germany, which has long been the ſlaughter-houſe of Europe, the cold was inſupportable. Reaumur's thermometer ſunk to 15. Birds dropped dead in their flight. In many places the centinels were frozen to death. An infectious diſeaſe, which began in the armies, diffuſed itſelf among the inhabitants, and made a dreadful havock. A peſtilential contagion raged among the cattle. Famine was ſoon added to the reſt of their calamities; and thus every miſery which can afflict mankind was poured out *from the vials of wrath* with the moſt liberal meaſure. There was no proſpect of an alleviation of their diſtreſſes. On the contrary, the ſufferings of the *people* only whetted the appetite of *Kings* for war; and out of the general want a reſource aroſe to their armies, which were the more readily recruited, becauſe the ſcanty pay and ſubſiſtence of a

* Smollet's Cont. Hiſt. Engl. vol. 6. ‡ Mante's Hiſtory of the War.

ſoldier became an object of envy to the unfortunate peaſantry; and death ſeemed more honourable and leſs certain by the ſword than by penury and diſeaſe *.

War, then, you perceive, Fellow Citizens, is only a frightful enumeration of maſſacres, aſſaſſinations, proſcriptions, and devaſtation; and the mild and gentle methods by which we in Europe make a boaſt to conduct it, are nothing more than an improvement in the myſtery of murder. I ſhall therefore haſten to ſhut up the ſcene, and I do it the more willingly, as the epithets of brilliant and glorious terms, which caſt a falſe and flattering luſtre round the great ſcourges of mankind, have been unſparingly applied to the war of which I am ſpeaking. We began a diſpute about a few waſte tracts of land in a diſtant part of the world, and we concluded it, by loſing the lives of two hundred and fifty thouſand of our fellow creatures, and incurring an additional debt of fifty millions.

We next come to that eventful war which ſeparated the continent of America from Great Britain, and convulſed every part of the empire to its deepeſt foundations. All war, indeed, is calamitous, but the American war was marked with circumſtances of horror peculiar and diſtinguiſhing. During the three firſt years of that nefarious and execrable war, nothing was offered to America but SLAVERY or DEATH. *Unconditional ſubmiſſion* was the language openly avowed by the Miniſters of the Crown; and the minds of the moſt moderate were inflamed by claims of legiſlative authority, at once deteſtable for their tyranny, and contemptible for their weakneſs. A right to bind the Americans, *in all caſes whatever*, was aſſerted by Parliament, in which they had not a ſingle repreſentative. I have called it contemptible for its weakneſs; for, in truth, it reſembled the unmeaning rhodomantade of ambaſſadors who ſtile their maſters Kings of *France* or Jeruſalem; and, as theſe titles do not ſecure a foot of land, ſo the declaratory act did not ſecure an atom of authority. It was a barren yew which caſt a noxious ſhade over that fair portion of the globe.

To accompliſh theſe objects, however, the trade of death was again commenced. For three years victory hung in ſuſpenſe, and the Britiſh army, during that period, alternately poſſeſſed and abandoned Boſton, New York, Philadelphia; as in France, we have ſeen the Duke of Brunſwick taking their fortified towns, and ſoon after expelled from them, with ignominy and defeat. The mercenary circles of Germany were ranſacked to dragoon America into unconditional ſubmiſſion; domeſtic inſurrections were excited among ſlaves, whoſe price of freedom was the murder of their maſters; and even the mercileſs Indian ſavages were brought down upon their defenceleſs frontiers, whoſe known rule of warfare is an undiſtinguiſhing maſſacre of all ages, ſexes, and conditions. Wherever theſe barbarians marched their route was marked with blood. The deſtruction of the fine, new, and flouriſhing ſettlement of Wyoming forms a protruding feature in this groupe of horrors, and therefore merits a parti-

* Annual Regiſter.

cular detail. The diſtrict conſiſted of eight townſhips, each containing a ſquare of five miles, beautifully ſituated on both ſides of the Suſquehannah. It was bleſt with a climate bland as the *dews of heaven*, and a ſoil luxuriantly fertile.

In this Eden of the new world, where every man poſſeſſed an abundance, which was the fruit of moderate labour and induſtry, where no man was very rich, nor very great; the inhabitants exhibited ſuch a picture of primeval happineſs as has ſeldom been equalled; and ſuch, indeed, as humanity in its preſent ſtate, ſeems ſcarcely capable of exceeding.

But neither the happineſs of the climate, the fertility of the ſoil, nor the remoteneſs of the ſituation, could preſerve the tranquillity of that happy ſpot. The demon of diſcord blew his horn among their habitations; and the ſettlers, who were denominated *the friends of government*, holding a ſecret correſpondence with the Indians, ſtung the boſom of that confidence on which they were unſuſpectingly ſuffered to repoſe, and cancelled every law of nature and humanity.

The maſk was ſoon thrown off. They now appeared openly in arms; and while they aſſumed the dreſs, they adopted the practices, of the ſavages. Having maſſacred the men ſtationed to defend one fort, which guarded the diſtrict, they proceeded to the next; and, to cheer the drooping ſpirits of the weak remaining garriſon, ſent in, for their contemplation, the bloody ſcalps of two hundred of their late relations, friends, and comrades. Colonel Denniſon, the commander of the fort, ſeeing the impoſſibility of any effectual defence, went with a flag to Butler, General of the combined army of ſavages and *friends of Government*, to know what terms he would grant on a ſurrender; to this application of weakneſs and miſery, Butler, with all the phlegm of a real ſavage, abruptly anſwered, "the hat-"chet." In theſe dreadful circumſtances, the unfortunate Governor having defended his fort until moſt of the garriſon were killed or diſabled, was at length compelled to ſurrender at diſcretion. Some of the unhappy perſons in the fort were carried away alive; but the barbarous conquerors, to ſave the trouble of murder in detail, ſhut up the greater part promiſcuouſly in the houſes and barracks, which having ſet on fire, they enjoyed the ſavage pleaſure of beholding the whole conſumed in one general blaze.

They then proceeded to the only remaining fort, called Wilkeſborough, which, in hopes of attaining mercy, was ſurrendered without reſiſtance, and without demanding any conditions. Here the tragedy was renewed with aggravated horrors. In this fortreſs were ſhut up the militia of the diſtrict. With theſe, as objects of particular enmity, the ſlaughter was begun; and they were butchered with every poſſible circumſtance of the moſt deliberate and wanton cruelty. The remainder of the men, with the women and children, not demanding ſo much particular attention, were ſhut up as before, in the houſes, which being ſet on fire, they periſhed all together in the flames.

A general ſcene of devaſtation was now ſpread through all the townſhips. Fire, ſword, and the other inſtruments of deſtruction

alternately triumphed. The corn fields were ſet on fire, and the ſtanding corn, now almoſt ready for the ſickle, burnt as it grew. The houſes, furniture, valuables of every kind, together with all thoſe improvements which owed their riſe to the perſevering toil, and patient induſtry of man, were as completely deſtroyed as their nature, or the activity of the ſpoilers would admit.—It has been often obſerved, Fellow Citizens, that the practice and habit of cruelty, with reſpect to any particular object, begets a facility in its execution, and a diſpoſition to its commiſſion with regard to all others. Thus theſe mercileſs ravagers, when the main objects of their cruelty were exhibited, ſeemed to direct their animoſity to every part of living nature; and, as if it were a relaxation or amuſement, cut out the tongues of the horſes and cattle, leaving them ſtill alive only to prolong their agonies.

Modes of inventive cruelty were alſo adopted, which muſt alternately freeze every breaſt with horror, and melt it with compaſſion. A captain Bedlock, who had been taken priſoner, being ſtript naked, had his body ſtuck full of thaſh pine ſplinters, and then a heap of knots of the ſame wood being ſtuck round him, the whole was ſet on fire, and his two companions, the captains Ranſon and Dorgee, thrown alive into the flames. *The friends of Government*, who had, at different times, abandoned the ſettlement in order to join in theſe ſavage expeditions, were the moſt diſtinguiſhed for their cruelty. Among theſe, one whoſe mother had married a ſecond huſband, butchered with his own hands, both her, his father-in-law, his own ſiſters and their infant children. Another, who, during his abſence, had ſent home ſeveral threats againſt the life of his father, now, not only realized them in perſon, but was himſelf, with his own hands, the exterminator of his whole family; mother, brother, and ſiſters, mingled their blood in one common carnage with that of the ancient huſband and father. The Indians, whoſe thirſt of blood was rather whetted than ſatiated, continued to purſue the fugitives (conſiſting moſtly of women and children), the miſerable relics of thoſe who had fallen in their habitations. Deſtruction was every where let looſe upon them, and met the hunted victims at every turn. Shivering with cold, appalled with fear, and ſurrounded with the ſhades of night, they wandered in the foreſts, as chance directed them, without guide, and without communication. Several women were delivered alone in the woods, at a great diſtance from every poſſibility of relief. The thread of infant life was no ſooner ſpun than it was cut ſhort; while many of the tender and feeble ſex, unable to ſuſtain the complicated ills of pain, cold, and diſeaſe, periſhed!

Humanity would induce us to throw a pall over ſights ſo hideous and deformed, did not a ſenſe of duty, with a view to prevent their repetition, inſtigate us to afford a faithful recital of enormities which degrade human nature beneath the beaſts that periſh!

The defeat and capture of Burgoyne's army, however, gave a new turn to affairs. It inſpired the leaders in America with con-

† Annual Regiſter.

fidence; and the faces which appeared in the new Congreſs, cauſed the countenance of the Court to droop. Foreign alliances were now formed, while the ſtate-houſe of independent Philadelphia opened its doors to the ambaſſador of France. Spain and Holland ſoon after acceded to the confederacy, and the calamities of war were multiplied in every quarter.

The people of Britain were, at length, ſtunned with their ſenſes by the heavy blows of national calamities. An embaſſy of perſons, ſome of whom had held the haughty language of unconditional ſubmiſſion, were ſent, at an immenſe expence acroſs the Atlantic, to lay the boaſted honour, dignity, and ſupremacy of the Britiſh Parliament, at the feet of that very vagrant Congreſs, whom the wretched hirelings of an abandoned Adminiſtration, had once loaded with every term of abuſe; in the ſame manner as the penſioned ſcribblers of the preſent day, calumniate that band of inflexible patriots, the Convention of France. As force had proved ineffectual, corruption, that hacknied engine of Courts, was now reſorted to as an expedient; but the ſame republican virtue which had bravely reſiſted the arms of England, refuſed to be bribed by her gold.

The Americans had taſted the ſweets of independence, and refuſed to accept that freedom as a boon, which they had firmly eſtabliſhed as a right. Grown furious with diſappointment, the Commiſſioners now threatened the extremes of war (which, as we have ſeen, had been ſubſtantially practiſed), and to eſtabliſh perpetual deſolation in a country, which we had neither the wiſdom to retain, nor the power to ſubdue. This menace produced no other effect, than the indignation of thoſe againſt whom it was directed, and more active exertions to repel hoſtilities, which were now embittered by the rage of diſappointment; while the baffled miſſionaries of an intriguing junto, covered with diſgrace, were compelled to abandon the nefarious project of corrupting a people who had bravely reſolved to be free and independent.

After a ſucceſſion of four years of bloody and waſteful defeats, or uſeleſs victories, Great Britain was forced to grant to the arms of America what ſhe had haughtily refuſed to her prayers. Their independence was formally, though reluctantly, acknowledged, *the object of the war abandoned*, and peace, reſtored to a diſtracted people, though with the loſs of two hundred thouſand lives, and with an increaſe of the national debt to the gigantic ſum of *two hundred and ſeventy-nine millions ſix hundred and ninety-eight thouſand pounds!*

An æra of quiet and happineſs now ſucceeded theſe ſcenes of deſolation. If even the fruits of victory are bitter and afflicting, how much was it to be expected, that England would have learned wiſdom by diſgrace and defeat, and that pacific councils would have diſtinguiſhed the cloſe of a reign, which had hitherto been clouded by domeſtic diſtractions, and ruinous war. But the repoſe of Europe was now to be diſturbed by an event as extraordinary, as it was unexpected. France, who, for many centuries, had groaned under a rigorous and unremitting tyranny, was about to break her

chains on the heads of her oppreſſors, and to exhibit an awful and magnificent ſcene to an aſtoniſhed world, A ſeries of brilliant and important events, which followed each other in rapid ſucceſſion, and which emancipated that country from the feudal tyranny of the nobles, and the ſupercilious impoſture of the prieſthood, are too freſh in the minds of all men, to ſtand in need of repetition.

France ſtarted from the dead repoſe of deſpotiſm, like another Lazarus from the tomb, and glowed with animated life, and invigorating freedom. It was then that the herd of vermin courtiers, who had long abuſed the credulity, and rioted upon the ſpoils of the people, no longer able to burrow themſelves under the throne, fled diſmayed from that juſtice which they had long, with impunity, been permitted to violate. A conſtitution was now formed, compoſed indeed of diſcordant materials, but which *ſeemed* calculated to guard the rights of the people from future encroachments of the Crown. But men accuſtomed to boundleſs and uncontrouled ſway, are not eaſily brought to regulate their conduct by the ſimple rules of reaſon and of juſtice. At no long period from his acceptance of the conſtitution, the King of the French, attended by his whole family, made an effort to eſcape, and to join thoſe abandoned parricides, who had filled all Europe with their calumnies and lamentations, and whoſe wily intrigues were at that very period exciting foreign powers to embrue their hands in the blood of their native country. He left behind, indeed, a juſtifying memorial, ſtating, that the engagements into which he had recently entered with his people, as they had been extorted by compulſion, could have neither the force, nor the obligation of a law, and ſcrupled not to avow (perfidious impoſtor!) that he ſhould deem himſelf juſtified in violating that conſtitution, which, in the face of heaven and earth, he had ſworn to preſerve.

By the vigilance and fidelity of the people, the project proved abortive. He was arreſted in his flight, and brought back to his capital, eſcorted by the people, whoſe ill-placed affection for their monarch, impreſſed that indignation which his detected duplicity might juſtly have excited. Upon his entry into Paris, not a ſingle reproach was hurled, not a ſingle murmur was breathed from the lips of the ſpectators. What puniſhment, Fellow Citizens, do you think was inflicted upon him, for this breach of good faith, of which the object was to annihilate the liberties of his country? None. He was conducted to his palace, re-inveſted with the authority which he had ſhamefully abandoned, and enabled to ſupport the dignity of a King, by the liberal donation from his abuſed people, of a yearly income of one million two hundred and fifty thouſand pounds, If the mind of Lewis had been ſuſceptible of virtue, a conduct ſo generous on the part of his people, and ſo unmerited on his own, would have rivetted him for ever to the real intereſts of France. But the ſoil was too barren to admit of culture.

Confidence among men is of a nature ſo delicate, that when once it is violated, it is ſeldom reſtored; nor was the conduct of Lewis calculated to regain it. Part of that income, which the pooreſt

peasant contributed to pay, was squandered in administering to the lazy pomp and destructive projects of those exiled brothers, who were then openly in arms against his own subjects; and, whose wasteful prodigalities had impoverished the revenues, while their profligate vices had corrupted the morals of their country. Lewis was detected in a secret and treasonable correspondence with the avowed enemies of the French nation. But there is a limit to credulity as well as to oppression. The people of the capital, joined by numbers from the provinces rouzed by a sense of their reiterated wrongs, rose as in one mass, and flew to arms. The events which distinguished the tenth of August are too well known to require a recital. The King fled trembling for protection into the arms of that assembly, whose ruin he had plotted, and whose confidence he had abused. The temple of Royalty was now explored, and the idol, before which France had servilely bowed down, was broken into pieces. The ever memorable decree of the twenty-first of September, completed the work which the tenth of August had begun. The abolition of Royalty was, on that day, pronounced by the unanimous voice of the Representatives of the French nation, the fabric of tyranny was overthrown from its foundations, and the Genius of Freedom stood triumphant on its ruins.

The Court of England, which had hitherto kept a haughty reserve, and even a sullen silence with respect to the affairs of France, now began to disclose its temper and dispositions. Her ambassador at Paris presented a memorial, in which the French were threatened, with the lively resentment of his royal master, in case the sacred person of the perjured Lewis should be made responsible for crimes which he had either meditated or committed. An insolent and imperious mandate was issued to a free and respectable nation, to stop the progress of justice, and give impunity to crimes. Inferior traitors might perish unheeded, but the great state criminal, whose guilt was enhanced by every argument which was urged for his vindication, was declared not amenable to any earthly judicature. France, however, disdained to submit to the dictates of any foreign crowned head; and firmly resolved, that as Lewis was responsible only to God for his conduct, if the proofs of his guilt should be solidly established, to send him to that tribunal to which alone he could appeal. He was arraigned at the bar of the Representatives of the nation, and, upon full and unequivocal evidence, was convicted of having kept foreign troops in his pay, which a decree of the Assembly had formerly disbanded, and of having transmitted large sums of the public money to pay the forces of his brothers, who were in arms against their country. This conviction only took place after a long and patient investigation of these charges, which he was enabled to repel by the aid of counsel, distinguished for their eloquence, their integrity, and acuteness. By a solemn decree of the Convention he was pronounced GUILTY OF HAVING ATTEMPTED TO SUBVERT THE LIBERTIES OF THE PEOPLE, and adjudged to a public and exemplary death. The sentence was executed with the deepest formality, and an in-

ſtructive leſſon was conveyed to the tyrants of the earth, by an event the moſt awful, that ever was exhibited on the blood-ſtained theatre of human actions.

By the death of Lewis, a pretext, which had been long and eagerly ſought, was furniſhed to the court of London to commence hoſtilities againſt France. The eſtabliſhment of a government erected on the broad baſis of freedom and *an equality of rights*, could not fail to appal the trembling and guilty heart of a miniſter, whoſe ſole object of rule, had been the aggrandizement of his connections, and the gratification of his ambition, and whoſe narrow and juggling ſyſtem had been uniformly ſupported by the feeble props of yearly expedients and daily tricks, by the wideſt diffuſion of the principles of corruption, by a dark, intricate, and wicked myſtery of ſtock-jobbing. Had he been ſincere in his attempts to ſave the life of Lewis, his conduct would have been preciſely the reverſe of what it was. He would have trampled upon the rules of diplomatic formality, when they militated with the principles of policy and of juſtice, and, inſtead of recalling his ambaſſador at the criſis of Capet's fate, would have enlarged his powers, and multiplied his inſtructions.

Had his vanity permitted him to have ſought in precedent a juſtification of his conduct, he would have eaſily found, in the hiſtory of his own country, the object of his reſearch. Upon the condemnation of Charles Stuart, King of England, Cardinal Mazarine miniſter of France, and the States of Holland, gave inſtructions to their ambaſſadors in London, to exert their efforts to ſave the life, of that monarch. They held not the haughty language of irritation, which muſt have inevitably tended to haſten his fate; although the high court of juſtice which condemned Charles, had been partially ſelected, while the convention who tried Lewis, were compoſed of men delegated by the united voice of all France. The perfect acquieſcence of the people in the deciſion of their repreſentative, gave to it the authoritative ſtamp of popular approbation. Humane men, therefore, who wiſhed to ſave the life of Lewis, ſhuddered at the conduct of the miniſter of England, which was ſo evidently deſtructive of its avowed purpoſe; wiſe men ſaw, with a juſt contempt, through the flimſy veil which was ſpread over his intentions, and bold men ſcrupled not to predict and to affirm, that an affected ſympathy for the dead, would be uſed as a pretext to ſhed the blood of the living.

The arguments urged by the zealots of deſpotiſm, are ſuch as, if well founded, muſt lay the liberties of mankind for ever in the duſt. If treaſon againſt the conſtitution, according to the opinion of Lord Somers, be the firſt ſpecies of that crime, the guilt of Lewis is greater than the guilt of the mere aſſaſſin of a king, in the ſame proportion, as the welfare of a whole people is an object of more regard, than the life of an individual. In France, power without reſponſibility was deemed a monſter in the moral world. The inſtitution of a king is plainly conditional. He may forfeit his right to allegiance, as undeniably and effectually, as the ſubject may forfeit his right to protection. Theſe argumeuts then, can in no caſe

be admitted by the diſciples of reaſon, or the ſons of freedom; and in the caſe of Lewis, in particular, had a direct tendency, to juſtify perfidy, to ſanctify perjury, to remove the ſacred boundaries of right and wrong, to call good evil, and evil good.

As no war it juſtifiable but that which is undertaken on a principle of ſelf-defence, the advocates for the preſent war, reſt their cauſe upon the previous declaration on the part of France. Let us now calmly examine the grounds of this complaint, and we truſt that we ſhall prove, that the motive which has actuated the conduct of the Engliſh miniſtry is neither injuries received, nor rights invaded, but a ſpirit of depredation on the commerce of France, which invited the hand of rapine, as it was ſuppoſed to be unprotected; that the motive which has actuated the conduct of our allies, is a ſpirit of conqueſt, and barefaced uſurpation, and that the motive which has actuated the conduct of all parties is an eagerneſs to interfere in the internal government of France, which ſtrikes at the root of her independence as a nation.

The condemnation of Pitt may be reduced to the proof of two ſimple, and almoſt ſelf-evident propoſitions—

Firſt, that a profound, permanent, and ſincere peace ſubſiſted between the two nations, when France thought proper to change the form and ſyſtem of her government.—Second, that the *hoſtile mind* exiſting in the executive government of a nation, manifeſted by facts too notorious to be denied, and too clear to be miſunderſtood, conſtitutes an infraction of the peace; and being therefore an act of aggreſſion, juſtifies not only the declaration of war, but the hoſtilities of the power on whom it was committed.

Theſe truths are inconteſtible, and muſt be acknowledged by every unprejudiced and diſintereſted man. Until the ſuſpenſion of the king from the functions of royalty, which happened on the tenth of Auguſt, England profeſſed towards France, a pacific diſpoſition, and was prodigal of her aſſurances, of a ſtrict neutrality, if not of a ſincere friendſhip. Her ambaſſador was then recalled, upon the futile pretext, that his credentials were ſimply to repair to the King of the French.

Had Pitt been as ſincere in his intentions, as he was loud in his declarations of preſerving peace, new credentials might have been iſſued, and a good underſtanding might ſtill have ſubſiſted between the two countries. But the proceedings of the Britiſh cabinet were a tiſſue of contradictions. Dundas, the Secretary of State, declared, that it was not the intention of his court to interfere in the internal government of France, while the recal of Lord Gower, at that very period, which was a ſtrong, though tacit diſapprobation of her government, gave the lie to his aſſertion. At that moment, the miniſter concealed a ſecret war, under the appearance of peace; and eagerly ſeized the hour of public diſtraction to inflict upon France, the wound of hoſtility, to a greater depth, and with fuller ſecurity. France, on the other hand, ſought to preſerve the friendſhip of a nation, whom ſhe could reſpect without fearing; and to maintain peace, though ſhe dreaded not war. Had a ſimilar ſpirit

influenced the councils of Pitt, the public repoſe would not now have been diſturbed; for, it is ſurely his duty to prove not only injuries received, but redreſs demanded and refuſed. Profeſſions of moderation are frequently the cover of a boundleſs ambition; and it is from the actions of miniſters alone, that underſtanding and diſintereſted men will ultimately decide upon the motives of their conduct, and the ſentiments of their heart.

But the government of France had given the moſt unequivocal proof of her pacific diſpoſition. Her enmity to ſurrounding nations was buried in the ſepulchre of monarchy. Peace was interwoven in the very texture of her conſtitution. She had proſcribed all war of offence by an expreſs declaration; and though it may be ſaid, that no civilized nation ever yet avowed itſelf the aggreſſor in war, yet ſuch a declaration on the part of the government, muſt be conſidered as the harbinger of peace, as it tends to render offenſive wars odious to the people, and to infuſe, into their minds, a moral principle for the regulation of their conduct.

Upon the reſurrection of peace among the nations of the earth, France was the firſt to throw away her ſhroud. Is it not, therefore, Fellow Citizens, a fact as ſingular as it is melancholy, that the only nation within the great circle of the globe, which has had the boldneſs to *denounce* all war, except ſuch as is undertaken on a principle of preſervation, ſhould ſee arrayed for her deſtruction, thoſe bands of mercenaries, the ſtanding armies of Europe, and ſhould be branded as the ſyſtematic diſturber of that repoſe, to which it had repeated the moſt lively and ſolemn aſſurances. Of ſuch a conduct what ſhall we think, but that courts have an intereſt in deceiving the people, whom they pretend to inſtruct, that open injuſtice cannot even be ſpared the reproaches of perfidy and diſſimulation, and that they attribute thoſe motives to the actions of others, which they are conſcious, have ſo powerfully influenced their own.

But though France had been deaf to the claims of juſtice, it is not probable, that aſſailed as ſhe was by the arms of the two moſt warlike nations on the continent, and by an envenomed faction in her own boſom, ſhe would wantonly have encreaſed the number of her enemies, by violence and aggreſſion. On this occaſion, a regard for her very exiſtence was a warrant for her moderation; nor could ſhe have violated the principles which ſhe profeſſed, without being mad even paſt the cure of hellebore, and ſelf-devoted to deſtruction.

The declaration of war, on the part of France, has been frequently mentioned, by the friends of the miniſter, as a ground of his juſtification. But theſe ceremonies, it has been well obſerved, are merely the heralds, which announce the terrible exchange of peace for war, and are only the meaſures that nations have reciprocally agreed on to avoid treachery and ſurpriſe. France, as unwilling to ſuſtain injuſtice, as ſhe was indiſpoſed to do it, exhibited, by this act, an inſtance of her ſincerity, at well as of her firmneſs; and

though she was not the first to strike, would not be the last to suffer.

But France, it has been asserted, by her decree of the 19th of November attempted to erect the standard of revolt in every country throughout Europe; and, that by her invasion of Holland and her correspondence with certain societies in England, she openly executed what her decree had formerly avowed. If the opening of the Scheldt, at the express request of the inhabitants of the Low Countries, through whose territories it flows, as the Thames does through yours; if that measure, I say, be construed as a breach of treaty, it should also be recollected, that treaties, extorted by force and a baneful spirit of monopoly, are deficient in that principle, which alone can render them sacred and binding; and, that when the same measure was adopted by the Emperor in the year 1785, England did not manifest the slightest intention to prevent its taking place: a contradiction, which cannot be reconciled at the bar of reason, unless we suppose (a supposition which the melancholy fate of divided Poland sufficiently justifies) that the generous interference of free states to dispense the blessings which they enjoy, excites and justifies the interference of crowned heads; while the insolent and rapacious ambition of despots may seize the dominions of a defenceless neighbour, and commit, with impunity, an act of injustice, which shall be secretly connived at, if not openly supported, by every Court in Europe.

But Holland sought not the interference of England, and, if we may judge from the conduct which she held, was rather willing to compromise the dispute by negotiation, than to decide it by arms; and England herself can, with ill grace, complain of the conduct of France, since, in the year 1786, she united her arms with the despotic power of Prussia, and with a shameful effrontery, interfered in the domestic distractions of Holland, to erect the tyranny of the Stadtholder upon the ruins of the freedom, and in opposition to the wishes, of the people.

The addresses of certain free societies in England, to congratulate France on the establishment of her liberties, have been another pretext for this war of the minister. But if the voice of reason be suffered to prevail over the fears of despotism (too successfully employed in exciting those dangers which she affects to dread), humanity must rejoice at every proceeding, which, by producing an extinction of national antipathies, will establish *peace on earth and good-will towards all men.* It is rather remarkable, that England should have made these addresses a ground of complaint, when the Court of Saint James's, since the beginning of the Revolution, and the destruction of the Bastille, had been the open asylum of those traitors and emigrants, whom France had expelled from her bosom as the disturbers of her repose.

The despotic court of Versailles had long been considered as the arsenal, from which issued those thunders which disturbed the peace, and oppressed the liberties of Europe; and this baneful system had been attributed, by our ministers, to the nature of her government.

Strange then, muſt it appear to you, my Countrymen, that as ſoon as deſpotiſm was extinguiſhed in France, and the *accurſed thing removed from the camp*, England ſhould have ſhewed an alacrity to adopt a ſyſtem, which, for more than a century, ſhe had loudly condemned, and which France had renounced in the eyes of all Europe. But, the period, we truſt, is haſtily approaching, when the ſpell of political enchantment will be diſſolved, when mankind, no longer blinded by prejudice or paſſion, will ceaſe to be the victims of bloody projectors, will regard the intereſt of their neighbour as inſeparable from their own, and will claſp, within the circle of univerſal benevolence, the brotherhood of the human race.

If England really enjoys the freedom of which ſhe boaſts, ſhe has nothing to dread from the addreſſes of ſocieties to nations who, like France, are ſtruggling to be free; but ſhould rather encourage that freedom of diſcuſſion which muſt cheriſh at home the *ſacred flame*, and ſtrengthen the fundamental principle of her government.

I ſhall now ſay a few words, Fellow Citizens; firſt upon the juſtice of the war, and the object which it purſues, and afterwards upon its policy and probability of ſucceſs.

The conqueſt of France has been formerly diſavowed by Pitt, and though little dependence is to be placed upon the lying lips of that miſerable Quixote, whoſe whole life has been one uniform ſeries of projects wickedly planned and weakly executed*, of aſſertions pompouſly made and ignominiouſly retracted, of reforms facetiouſly propoſed and treacherouſly abandoned; though the political mountebank has ſo often ſhifted the ground of his ſtage, until, at laſt, he has no ground to ſtand upon, yet ſuch is the evident impracticability of conqueſt, that I ſhall not attribute even to Pitt himſelf, what the moonſtruck knight of Gervantes, in the maddening hour of imaginary conqueſt, would ſcarcely have projected. But, if it is not a war of conqueſt, it is at leaſt a war of partition; and, in conjunction with the deſpots of the continent, we are attempting to diſmember France, and are acting, towards that Republic, the very part, which, with hypocritical grimace, we deprecate as to Poland.

I call upon Pitt, as he ſhall anſwer upon that black and bitter day of retribution, which is now hovering over his guilty head;—I call upon him, in the name of the people of England, whoſe blood he is ſhedding, whoſe treaſures he is laviſhing, to know whether Frederick Duke of York, the commander in chief of the Britiſh forces, did not take poſſeſſion of Valenciennes in the name of the Emperor of Germany; and, if the troops of that deſpot are not now in poſſeſſion of that fortreſs?—I call upon him to anſwer, whether our good allies, the Auſtrians are not alſo in poſſeſſion of Conde and Queſnoy, two towns which likewiſe belong to the Republic of France, which have been likewiſe delivered up to thoſe mercenaries without the ſmalleſt ſtipulation on our part, that when peace arrives, they ſhall be reſtored to the ſon of the unfortunate Capet; whoſe

* Witneſs his Nootka Sound negotiation, concerning cat-ſkins, which coſt the people three millions of money, and his intended war againſt the Empreſs of Ruſſia, whoſe huſband died a ſudden death, but who is now our good ally.

intereſts Pitt affects to cheriſh, and whoſe fate he hypocritically bewails, while he is marking out his perſon as an object of vengeance to the whole French nation, by the adoption of meaſures, which, as the eloquent Sheridan has well expreſſed it, are whetting the axe which hangs over the head of that unfortunate infant. I call upon him to anſwer to the people of England, whoſe ill-placed confidence once raiſed him to that ſtation, which he has too long filled and diſhonoured, whether the town of Dunkirk was not ſummoned by the Duke of York, not for Lewis the Seventeenth, but for his father, George the Third, King of England The *avowed* object of the war has been long ſince accompliſhed; the expulſion of the French from Holland and Brabant, and the happy moment of concluding a peace has paſſed away. The miniſter of England *now* avows, as we have lately ſeen by an article of our treaty with the King of Pruſſia, that we are fighting *to impoſe a government upon France*. Of what nature, I would aſk you, Fellow Citizens, do you think, is the government propoſed? Not a free government, not even that incongruous conſtitution of 1789, in which a partial repreſentation of the people was joined with an hereditary monarch, endowed with an income ſo immenſe, as to be able, by *influencing*, or, in other words, by bribing the deputies, (a cuſtom not altogether peculiar to France) to defeat the great ends of repreſentative government.

Now mark, with attention, the contradictions which have taken place. The Prince of Saxe Cobourg, upon the reduction of Conde, publiſhes a proclamation, in which he offers to France the conſtitution of 1789. A congreſs compoſed of the repreſentatives of all the combined powers who were then ſitting at Antwerp, recal his declaration, cancel his word, and declare that he had exceeded the limits of his authority. The Duke of York, the ſon and repreſentative of the King of England, who is a member of that congreſs, is a party to the declaration, and becomes thereby an inſtrument of diſgrace to his ſuperior officer, and of a violation of good faith to the people of France. In the mean time, that the conſiſtency of Pitt might keep pace with his integrity in beginning the war, and his wiſdom in conducting it, Lord Hood is ſent into the Mediterranean, with a fleet, (I will not ſay to lie idle, for his lordſhip is an active citizen, and having been, three times, a candidate for the incorrupt city of Weſtminſter, well knows, that there are other means of convincing mankind beſides blows or rhetoric), and the town of Toulon is taken *by the gentle means of negociation;* to be held in truſt for Lewis the Seventeenth, by a motley groupe of Britiſh, Spaniſh, Piedmonteſe, and Neapolitan troops, the greater part of whom are the ſubjects of governments well known for their attachment to the civil and religious liberties of mankind.

Our depredations in the north of France, then, it ſeems, are to be compenſated by our generoſity in the ſouth. But the conqueſt of kings produce only an accumulation of burdens upon the people. While the ruined merchant and manufacturer are periſhing in your goals, (a numerous tribe of court dependents, (a race of men now known in France by a recollection of their iniquities and a com-

miſſioner at their head, with a ſalary of five thouſand pounds a-year, are ſent to Toulon, though declared in a ſtate of ſiege, *to cry peace when there is no peace.*

The injuſtice of the war has been inconteſtibly proved by the facts which I have enumerated, We pretend to aſſert the rights of the ſon of Lewis Capet, and we aſſiſt the Auſtrians in robbing him of his dominions. We exclaim againſt the convention as an aſſembly of tyrants, and we ſend into France to rid her of her tyranny, thoſe zealous diſpenſers of the bleſſings of freedom, the dragoons of Saxe Cobourg, and the huſſars of Eſterhazi.

I ſhall now addreſs a few words to a certain deſcription of men, who, to the diſgrace of this country, I am afraid are not few, upon the policy of the war, and its probability of ſucceſs; men who, regardleſs of the principle of the war, look only to the iſſue of it, to whom diſaſter alone is guilt, and with whom ſucceſs, however founded, like Abraham's faith, will hold the place of righteouſneſs.

If our object is peace, the mode of obtaining it is not to outrage the feelings of thoſe with whom we are at war. Since the general reception, which the conſtitution of France has received among her citizens, it cannot be doubted, but that it is the creature of the people, and that actuated as they are by the moſt ardent enthuſiaſm, they will ſupport it though aſſailed by that tempeſt of war, which the demon of deſpotiſm has conjured up for its deſtruction. Wiſe men are always practicable men. As the *avowed* object of the war, therefore, is not the extirpation of the whole nation, ſome reſpect ſhould be paid, not only to the principles, but to the prejudices which influence them. That conſtitution, which they regard as the wiſeſt and the beſt, has, by the hundred and twenty-firſt article, expreſsly declared, "that France will not make peace with an enemy that oc- "cupies its territory." To inflame their reſentments by deſtructive hoſtility, or corrupt artifice, is not the way to diſpoſe them to amity and reconciliation. Thoſe, who began the war, have not only drawn the ſword, but have thrown away the ſcabbard. In many parts of that once flouriſhing country, we have ſeen war ſtripped of all that "pomp, pride, and circumſtance," which ſo ſtrongly faſcinates the imagination. It has been diveſted of that glare of glory which ſo often throws a ſhade over its deformities, and the ghaſtly carcaſe has not only been expoſed in all its nakedneſs, but polluted and diſtained by the bloody hand of barbarians *. In the

* The following is an authentic account of the cruelties exerciſed by the Auſtrians and emigrants, which was communicated to a friend of mine, by an Engliſh officer of untainted veracity, who was at Liege when thoſe cruelties were perpetrated.

" The Auſtrians continued to pour into Liege a prodigious quantity of ſhells and " red-hot balls for many hours after it was evacuated by the French, whereby a num- " ber of citizens were killed, and many houſes deſtroyed; after which a part of the " troops entered the city, and the moſt horrid ſpectacle preſented itſelf that ever eyes " beheld. Men, women, and children, every human creature that they met was in- " diſcriminately butchered. The houſes were broken open, and the ſhops plunder- " ed. The women were firſt violated, and afterwards murdered. Two ſtreets in " particular, la rue de St. Nicolas, and rue St. Anne, experienced all the fury of the " ſoldiers, nor did the officers ſhew more moderation or humanity than the common " men. La rue St. Nicolas is a waſte of ruins, and its inhabitants are deſtroyed. " Some of thoſe belonging to the rue St. Anne, eſcaped with their lives; but the num-

midſt, however, of all the cruelties, terror, and deſolation, which follow your arms, *for before them is as the garden of Eden, and behind them as the deſolate wilderneſs*, the ſpirit of France remains unſubdued. Two bloody and expenſive campaigns are now almoſt cloſed, and not one ſingle department has ſought your aid to eſtabliſh for them a government. The extent of your empire, (as was well ſaid, during the American war,) and of your cantonments, is the ſame. Whatever you command, you command by the mouth of the cannon, but you command no more.

The object of the war is not only changed, but the nature of the enemies with whom you have to fight. Over the fleet and armies of the tyrants of France, the people of Great Britain have repeatedly triumphed. Recollect, however, that it is not upon the ſatellites of deſpotiſm, but upon the whole French nation, that you are now making war. France is no longer a den of tyrants, and a dungeon of ſlaves. Six millions of armed men, determined to die or to be free, preſent to you a lofty and impregnable rampart, over which the eagles of deſpotiſm will, in vain, attempt to ſoar.

The arts of bribery, it is affirmed, have alſo been tried, and certain hands, albeit unuſed to the giving mood, have not diſdained to adminiſter the chalice of corruption. Upon this ſubject, it is in vain to addreſs men, whoſe conſciences have ceaſed to admoniſh, who have faces that cannot bluſh, and hearts that cannot feel.—To him ſo formed, however elevated his ſtation, I addreſs myſelf NOT; for I write only to human beings. But there are many among you, virtuous but miſguided. Such men I would ſeriouſly adviſe to conſider, how far any government is juſtified in converting the earnings of induſtry into the wages of ſin, and in applying thoſe ſums, which are given as the means of public defence, to the vile purpoſes

" ber of men, women, and children killed, after the enemy had left the city, is eſti-
" mated at ſix or ſeven thouſand."

The ſubſequent account is a literal tranſlation from the addreſs delivered at the bar of the National Convention, on the 29th of September, 1792, by citizen Robert, Mayor of Vancq, attended by Bernier, Recorder of that Community.

" Repreſentatives of the French people; I addreſs you in the name of ſeven or
" eight hundred citizens, to whom nothing remains but the aſhes of their habitations
" and their fidelity to the Republic, and who, for their attachment to the laws of
" their country, have experienced the vengeance of the enemies of liberty.

" On Monday, the 24th of this month (September) the Municipality of Vancc, in
" the diſtrict of Voſieres, and department of Ardennes, received an order in the name
" of the Marechal de Broglio, commanding a body of emigrants, whoſe head-quarters
" were then at Vouſieres, to ſupply his army with proviſions; which being refuſed
" by the Municipality, fire was ſet to the village, and in a moment the blaze conſum-
" ed our whole crop, both of wheat and barley, with our barns, ſtables, horſes, and
" nearly two hundred houſes with the church, were alſo deſtroyed. Their rage was
" not yet ſatisfied. They maſſacred, without diſtinction, old men, women, and chil-
" dren: they prevented a mother from entering her dwelling, to ſave her three in-
" fants, who periſhed in the flames

" They offered a pardon to any perſon who would deliver up myſelf and the rec-
" tor; but by a road unknown to them, we found means to eſcape. The emigrants
" ſatiated with the carnage, and covered with the blood of their countrymen, at length
" retired; but they tied to the tails of their horſes ſeveral of the inhabitants,
" whom they dragged away as a trophy of their inhuman triumph. We requeſt an
" aid of fifty thouſand livres to relieve the preſent wants of our community, as the
" loſs we have ſuſtained, is eſtimated at more than five hundred thouſand livres."

of perfidy and corruption, Thoſe objects of war, which cannot be compaſſed by fair and honourable hoſtility, ought not to be compaſſed at all. An end, which has no means but ſuch as are unlawful, is an unlawful end. If there is any feature in particular, which exhibits this war as a more marked object of abhorrence, it is not that the blood of man is ſhed, but that the moral elements, which compoſe his nature, are diſſolved; and that confidence, without which ſociety is a curſe, is ſapped to its foundations, by the poiſon of corruption.

The wickedneſs of the meaſure is ſuperior only to its weakneſs. What coffers ſo full, however profligate the principles of the poſſeſſor, and there are individuals, Fellow Citizens, I am informed, whoſe hoards are at once ſo ſecret and ſo enormous, as to baffle calculation as to their quantity, and conjecture as to their place, what coffers ſo full I ſay, as to be competent to corrupt thirty millions of people!—The fooliſh project reſembles the labours of the daughters of Danaus.—It is filling a ſieve with water. Be aſſured, that he who wickedly deſtroys the ſecurity of his neighbour, by that very act, endangers his own. By practices ſo deſtructive of all human intercourſe, you eſtabliſh principles, which may recoil upon yourſelves, and you may be entangled in the net which your own perfidy has woven.

Such, however, is the conduct of a government to the citizens of France, which, in the time of profound peace, reſounded with complaints, becauſe her ſubjects had congratulated a nation of freemen, that tyranny was no more!

It is not, Fellow Citizens, by arts like theſe, that France ſeeks to preſerve the allegiance of her own ſons, or to repel the enmity of foreign ſtates. Conſcious, that juſtice is the only ſolid foundation of government, ſhe exacts obedience only as ſhe deſerves it. "When "the government" (ſays the thirty-fifth article of the conſtitution) "violates the rights of the people, inſurrection becomes to the peo- "ple, and to every portion of the people, the moſt ſacred and in- "diſpenſible of duties." Thus has France declared the people not only the judges of their rights, but the avengers of their wrongs. She has legalized reſiſtance. The voice of truth, ſpeaking through the ſacred organ of her conſtitution. has publickly proclaimed to a liſtening world, THAT REBELLION TO TYRANTS IS OBEDIENCE TO GOD.

That part of the community who are called the monied intereſt, and upon whom Pitt principally depends for the ſupport of the war, ſhould particularly weigh the probable conſequences of its end, if the war be unſucceſsful. A ſpirit of enquiry has gone forth among men, and the foundation of the rights of property will be as accurately examined, as the foundation of the rights of perſons. As the ſum of public happineſs and proſperity is compoſed of the induſtrious exertions of honeſt individuals, he who trenches upon their poſſeſſions, becomes a public robber, and an enemy of the human race. But, at the ſame time, I would impreſs upon that claſs of men, to whom I am now ſpeaking, this important and irrefragable truth; that as all property is acquired, enjoyed, and tranſmitted under

the ſanction of ſociety, it is due to the public ſafety, whenever it is abuſed to its deſtruction. If Engliſhmen are once led to enquire into the right of their forefathers to tax that labour, a capacity to exert which has been their only inheritance, their ruſtic but penetrating underſtandings will deride the ſophiſtry of thoſe *financial* reaſonings, which they will conſider only as a cover to fraud, and the great pillar of corruption.—It is not, be it recollected, the ſabre that is wrought at the manufactory of Sheffield, or the cannon that is caſt in the foundery of Woolwich, which is the great inſtrument of deſtruction. Theſe would be as harmleſs, as when they ſlumbered in the bowels of the earth, in their ſtate of native oar, if the accurſed luſt of gain, that great mover of human agency, and that great ſource of human evils, did not ſtimulate them into action.

Effodiuntur opes irritamenta malorum.

It is avarice, ſays an old poet, which has ſown diſcord among brothers, which has excited mankind to maſſacre and war, and diſſolved the ties of kindred and of blood.

When the public burdens become too heavy to be borne, a period which the war is rapidly bringing on, the poor muſt either periſh under the preſſure, or taking with them from their native country, their induſtry and their houſhold gods, emigrate into a foreign land. The rich will then be left alone to pay the penalty of thoſe crimes, which avarice or ambition inſtigated them to commit. If the foundations of the great deep ſhould be broken up, the vengeance of the people may overtake thoſe, who ſupported the war, becauſe they partook of the plunder; and for whoſe guilt, if it be meaſured by the miſeries which it has occaſioned, no human language can afford an adequate ſeverity of reproach.

This, indeed, is a ſubject which cannot be too delicately treated. To the claſs of men, therefore. whom I now addreſs, what has already been ſaid, will, I truſt, prove ſufficient; for there are thoſe, whoſe intellects are quickened by a ſenſe of intereſt, though they are deaf to the calls of juſtice, and blind to the light of truth.

The miniſter wants ſixteen millions, which, together with a deficit of five millions in the revenue, make up the enormous ſum of twenty-one millions. The opening of the budget, like the opening of the box of Pandora, will pour forth innumerable evils, enormous taxes, upon the good people of England; to whoſe impoſitions, there ſeems to be no other limit than their patience to bear them. A tax upon Iriſh linen, a tax upon ſhoes, and upon a number of articles which conſtitute the neceſſaries of life, are to be propoſed and carried.—You are then literally to be taxed from top to toe, from the ſhirt upon your back to the ſhoe upon your foot; while a waſteful prodigality is pervading every department of the ſtate, and the greatneſs of your empire, like that of a pit, encreaſe in proportion to what is taken from it. The red book (properly ſo called, indeed, for the outſide bluſhes for the contents of the in), ſince the commencement of the war, has been ſwelled by additional bands of pen-

ſioners and placemen. Two boards, the India board, and the board of agriculture, with conſiderable ſalaries annexed, have been recently eſtabliſhed. The exchequer bill board for iſſuing five millions of money, for the relief of diſtreſſed traders, has alſo been added, and commiſſioners have been nominated to extend the patronage and influence of the crown. Thus the war makes bankrupts, to ſuccour whom a baneful influence is created, and evil follows evil, which, like Dryden's double poiſon, ſerves only to expel the other. In the mean time, while oppreſſion cripples induſtry at home, calamity lours upon our arms abroad. The ignominious flight of the Britiſh troops before Dunkirk, the total defeat of the Hanoverians at Hoondſchoote, and the diſcomfiture and retreat of the Auſtrians from Maubeuge, be aſſured, my countrymen, are only the forerunners of events ſtill more diſaſtrous. Remember, that the few places which you now hold in France, you hold only by a brittle tenure. It was only in the beginning of November laſt, during the firſt campaign, that the arms of France began to diſplay their vigour, and to ſcatter terror around them. The battle of Gemappe was fought, and one victory decided the fate of the Netherlands. The Dutch have abſolutely refuſed to march, as they entertain the ſtrongeſt averſion from a war, of which, they perceive, that they are only the victims. Holland may be again entered, the bank of Amſterdam, which Burke tells you, is identified with the Bank of England, may fall a prey to the arms of the victorious republic, and the tri-coloured flag may again wave in triumph over the fortreſſes of the United Provinces. Remember alſo, that it was only when the Duke of Brunſwick advanced towards the capital, it was not until that menacing meteor was blackening her horizon, that the people of France proved themſelves great in arms. A free people, like a high mettled and ſpirited individual, grow indignant from oppreſſion, and derive additional energy from the dangers which ſurround them.

Per damna, per caedes, ab ipſo
Ducit opes, animumque ferro.

If France ſucceeds, Amalthea's horn is in her hand, and ſhe pours forth the bleſſings of liberty and peace; and if ſhe falls, ſhe brings down with her, juſtice, virtue, and the cauſe of freedom, and the nation which is buried in their ruins, is happier than the nation which ſurvives them.

MEN OF ENGLAND, who are advocates for the war, rely not on thoſe numerous and diſciplined armies, which you yourſelves have ſeen, for many months, only hovering over the frontiers of France, but which have not been able to penetrate into her interior. The extraordinary exertions of the continental tyrants pervade only the ſurface, but the vital ſpirit languiſhes within. Like the dying convulſions of a giant, they are not ſigns of health, but ſymptoms of diſſolution, and may be termed rather agonies, than efforts.

I have now proved, Fellow Citizens, I hope, to your conviction, that the war is unjuſt, becauſe its object is conqueſt; and that it is impolitic, becauſe there exiſts not a probability of ſucceſs. If unjuſt, you cannot as good men, and if impolitic, you will not, as wiſe men, proceed in it.

But the object of the war, Pitt tells you, is now changed, and that England muſt have "indemdification for the paſt, and ſecurity for "the future." Indemnification, for what? Has France invaded your territory, or deſpoiled you of your commerce? In what has ſhe injured you? She has injured you in nothing. If then you have received no injury, there is no ground for indemnification; and, as for ſecurity for the future, you ſtand preciſely in the ſame relation to her, that you do to all other foreign powers, and have the beſt pledge for your future ſecurity, in your mutual intereſts to live in peace. Indemnification for the paſt, and ſecurity for the future, are, therefore, only the words of a man, whoſe ſole aim, to uſe the language in Job, is to "darken wiſdom by words without underſtand-"ing."

Another reaſon has been aſſigned for our aggreſſion upon France, which, thoſe who aſſign it, while they ſecretly laugh at the dupes of their impoſture, do not themſelves believe. It has, however, made an impreſſion upon many good men, and, for that reaſon alone, deſerves a refutation. With the preſent government of France, we cannot treat, ſay miniſters, becauſe they are a gang of Atheiſts, whom no treaties, and no ſignatures can bind. Thoſe who prefer ſo heavy a charge, ſhould at leaſt be as ready with their proof, as they are with their accuſation. But on this head they are ſilent. Becauſe *one* madman in the convention avowed himſelf an atheiſt, are we authoriſed to brand the whole body with opprobrium? As well might we aſſert, that the good Commons of England are righteous over much, becauſe Hill is a Methodiſt; as well might we aſſert that they are an aſſembly of madmen, becauſe Burke, in the paroxyſms of his rage, has brandiſhed a dagger. Is a charge to be brought againſt the new government of France, as a pretext for the war, of that very vice, of which the old government, which we now are labouring to reſtore, was ſo notoriouſly guilty? Before the revolution Atheiſm was avowedly the creed of the Court; and while Atheiſm was profeſſed, even worſe than Atheiſm was practiſed; as he who profeſſes that he believes in no God, is not ſo bad as he who lives as if there were none. During the æra of royalty, France was governed neither by the precepts of morality, nor the injunctions of religion. She was governed by will. By the arbitrary will of the worſt of her own ſubjects; of the worſt of both ſexes; of the worſt of the human race. By Maria Antoinetta, a profligate adultereſs, by her pathic Polignac; by Provence, by Artois, by Calonne. by Breteuil; by princes that were ſtupid or mad; by women that were abandoned to ambition and to luſt; by miniſters who are exiled plunderers, panders and paraſites, inſolent and rapacious. Yet, with this ſweet unleavened maſs, the Cabinet of Saint James's diſ-

dained not to hold intercourſe, and, at this period, are receiving into their boſoms the miſſionaries of thoſe, at whoſe gigantic crimes the great author of evil himſelf muſt look with envy and exultation.

Men of England, that religion which conſiſts in a love of virtue and a deteſtation of vice; in a ſenſe of our dependence on the Creator of the world; in a conformity to his will, and in a regular practice of thoſe moral duties, which, as ſocial beings, we owe to each other, is the infallible ſymptom of an upright heart. But let us not be deceived by a ſpecious exterior. The religion of ſome men, like the Sodom apple, is fair without, but rotten at the core. The ſtricteſt attention to the *ceremonies* of religion, is perfectly compatible with the groſſeſt violation of the duties of morality; and examples are not wanting among kings themſelves, who chaunt their morning oriſons to the groans of their people, and who, with pious profanation, uplift thoſe hands to the throne of mercy, which are ſtill reeking with the blood of their ſubjects.

In one ſenſe, indeed, the war may truly be called a war of religion; for it reſembles the cruſades in the madneſs of the principle, and in the cruelty of the perſecution. In our attempt to rebuild the Temple of Tyranny, like the Jews in rebuilding the temple of their forefathers, we carry on the holy work with one hand, and hold our ſwords in the other to defend it.

Several members of both Houſes have not ſcrupled to avow, that the war is a war of anger as well as of intereſt, and, that the popular principles which prevail in France, muſt be extirpated before Europe can reaſonably expect peace. Whatever may be the ſyſtem of French government, in the opinion of thoſe men, this, at leaſt, may be, with confidence, aſſerted; that, harraſſed as ſhe is by hoſtilities without, and by faction within, the principles of France have not hitherto received a fair opportunity of diſplaying their natural effects. The minds of Frenchmen have been inflamed by injuries, and irritated by reproach. Under all theſe circumſtances, can we wonder at thoſe exceſſes, which, however to be lamented, have invariably attended all great revolutions. But in no human ſyſtem can we expect, that good ſhould be complete, it is ſufficient if it be predominant. The fair mode of determining upon the merits of the government which France has adopted, is, not by inſpecting, with captious and malignant acuteneſs, the exceſſes which ſhe has committed (exceſſes occaſioned by thoſe very men who are the firſt to clamour againſt them) but by a diſpaſſionate examination of the principles of her ſyſtem, to decide, whether they are not better calculated, if allowed a free and full operation, to produce the greateſt ſum of human happineſs, which human talents have hitherto been able to erect upon the broad baſis of human integrity. This is the only ground of rational diſcuſſion; all the reſt is malignant prejudice, or idle declamation. If the war is undertaken, as it has been aſſerted, to change the principles of Frenchmen, the means are ſtrangely adapted to the end. Force never yet made men other than hypocrites, or ——— martyrs. Inſtead of ſubſidizing half of the merce-

haries of Europe, his majeſty's miniſters would, far better, have employed thoſe meek and diligent paſtors, the learned doctors of Oxford, Cambridge, and Gottingen, whoſe duty, (however violated by their practice) is to preach peace and not a ſword. Thoſe diſintereſted academics would doubtleſs abandon, without a pang, their comfortable emoluments, and their cloyſtered cells, the peaceful ſcenes of ſlumber and meditation, to engage in this bloodleſs, but uſeful warfare; and Europe would look unapalled upon a conteſt, the object of which, if force be the inſtrument, is to ſweep from the earth thirty millions of men, with the beſom of deſtruction.

I have now mentioned to you, Fellow Citizens, every poſſible object of the war, all of which are equally unlawful. I know of no other indeed, unleſs the miniſter means to renew the waſteful wars of the Plantagenets, and to revive, in the perſon of our gracious Sovereign, the dormant claims on his ancient kingdom of France.

By the law of Scotland, the king could not declare war without the concurrence of the nation. This invaluable right was recognized at the Revolution, and afterwards at the Union. But towards the cloſe of the reign of Queen Anne, a reign in which the intereſts of Britain were ſhamefully ſacrificed to the ambitious views of the Houſe of Hanover, this right was aboliſhed.

In America, that happy land of freedom and an equality of rights, the blood of man is never ſhed to ſatiate the cruelty and ambition of crowned heads. America is without courts, and therefore ſhe is without wars. Wars are even prevented by the very ſtructure of the government. If a diſpute ariſes between two Commonwealths, concerning a tract of land, or a branch of commerce, a court of commiſſioners compoſed of two deputies from each ſtate, is immediately convened to decide upon the merits of the buſineſs. With theſe enlightened republicans, reaſon, as it is the only proper, ſo it is the ſole arbiter of differences. In the year 1784 a large tract of weſtern territory was claimed both by the Commonwealths of Penſylvania and Connecticut. Commiſſioners from each ſtate were appointed, and met at Trenton in the Jerſeys. The ground of the reſpective claim of each party was examined, and a deciſion was made in favour of Penſylvania. The deciſion was peacably acquieſced in as ſoon as it was pronounced. Had this diſpute ariſen in Europe, a hundred thouſand lives would have been loſt in deciding it; or, had it even been ſettled without an appeal to the ſword millions would have been ſquandered in the mummery of negotiation. In America, the buſineſs was effected at a ſmall expence, and without the effuſion of a ſingle drop of blood.

In America, that country which God and man have concurred to render the bliſsful habitation of abundance and of peace, the poor are not broken down by taxes to ſupport the expenſive trappings of royalty, or to pamper the luxury of an inſolent nobility. No lordly peer tramples down the corn of the huſbandman, no proud prelate wrings from him the tythe of his induſtry. They have neither chicanery in ermine, nor hypocriſy in lawn. The community is not there

divided into an oppreſſed peaſantry and an overgrown ariſtocracy, the one of whom lives by the plunder of the ſtate, while the others are compelled to be the objects of it. Plenty is the lot of all, ſuperfluity of none.

An equal and undiſtinguiſhing law is the only ſovereign acknowledged by a free and an united people, which, as all contribute to make, ſo all are inclined to ſupport. The word ſubordination, a term unknown in the vocabulary of freemen, and which means only a reciprocation of ſlavery and tyranny, never wounds the ear of the high-minded republican. Order, real order is preſerved, becauſe no man has an intereſt in diſturbing it. The peace of millions cannot there be broken by the bloody diſpoſition of *one* man. The maxims of the Prince of Peace are not only preached but practiſed. The trumpet of war is never ſounded by the heralds of deſpotiſm, to enkindle a ſpirit of murder and of rapine. Dungeons, whips, chains, racks, and gibbets are not there reſorted to as leſſons of morality, or inſtruments of conviction. Crimes are not often puniſhed with rigour, becauſe they are prevented by inſtruction. Above all, a baneful luxury, which engenders diſeaſes, that not only imbitter life, but poiſon the very ſource of it, is there unknown. They have no wants but ſuch as nature gives, and which may be eaſily ſupplied by a moderate degree of labour. Life is ſimple, and therefore it is happy.

This is not the gaudy picture of a diſtempered imagination, but the real repreſentation of things which are. Many years have I reſided in the boſom of that country, and have ſeen and felt the bleſſings which I deſcribe; and therefore, with honeſt pride, and conſcious truth, I hold it up as an object of admiration to the world.

Friends and Fellow Citizens, the great ſource of the evil is here, the people of Europe in general have as little connection with their reſpective governments, except, indeed, as they are the object of their plunder, as they have with the governments of China or Japan. Does a gazette extraordinary, which announces the taking of Conde, or Valenciennes, enable you to procure one pint of beer, or a morſel of bread for your helpleſs and famiſhing children? Does the ringing of bells, the firing of cannon, or the illumination of ſhops, either lighten your labour, feed your hunger, or clothe your nakedneſs? Is there any wiſdom in ſpilling the beſt blood in the country, to obtain that, from the poſſeſſion of which you derive no advantage? Would not the candle which blazes before the door of the penſioned paraſite of a court, be far better employed in cheering the gloomy cot of the ſolitary peaſant? Victories which bring honour to the arms, may bring diſgrace to the councils of a nation. I freely confeſs, that the glory acquired by his highneſs of York, on the plains of Famars, has no charms for me; nor am I delighted to hear, that the German eagle, that emblem of tyranny and maſſacre, now flies in triumph over the walls of a town, where lately waved the banners of freedom. By war, kings extend their dominions, and encreaſe their revenues, while the inferior animals that have hunted with the

lion, are amply rewarded for all the ſweat and blood, which their loyalty has coſt them, by the honour of having ſweated and bled in ſuch company.

Man is not naturally hoſtile to man. He is made for labour, and not for war. The very ſtructure of your bodies muſt convince you of this truth. You have neither the tuſks of the boar nor the fangs of the tyger. The cries of diſtreſs, by inſtinctive impulſe, aſſail the heart of man, and the hand of man, by involuntary motion, is ſtretched out to relieve it. *God made man perfect, but he has ſought out many inventions.* Whence, then, have ariſen, the ills of which we complain? An order of men have ariſen, in ſociety, who claiming privileges, not only diſtinct from, but even oppoſite to the common intereſt of the people, have found, that the only means of preſerving thoſe privileges, were to keep you in the dark, and to make you at once, the dupes and victims of their projects. Hence a ſpirit of diſcord is excited among you, and thoſe hands which were deſtined, by the goodneſs and wiſdom of Providence, to claſp in a fond embrace, the wife of your boſom, and the children of your loins, are now doomed to forge the weapons of war, and to be bathed in the blood of innocent man.

It is clear, that before a man can perform his duty, it is neceſſary that he know it. If government claims the right of puniſhment, it neceſſarily incurs the duty of inſtruction. But of the thouſands who fall victims to the rigour of your laws, how few have government taken the pains to inſtruct! Nay, by wringing from the poor the ſcanty pittance which their hard labour earns, to ſupport lords of the bedchamber, wardens of cinque ports, gentlemen of the band of penſioners, have they left them aught, but the melancholy alternative of periſhing in the ditch, or plundering on the road. The ſnares of temptation are every where ſet around them. Governments, like the author of evil, firſt make the criminal and then puniſh the crime. The property of the rich is every where hedged round by the fences of the law, while the little poſſeſſions of the poor are expoſed to depredation. The lordly peer may trample down, with impunity, the corn of the huſbandman; but if the peaſant kills a hare to give food to his family, he is ſentenced to pay the ſum of three pounds, which he has no means of obtaining, and if he cannot perform an impoſſibility, is ſent, by the decree of *juſtice*, to periſh in a gaol.

The moral law is engraven upon the fleſhy tablets of the heart of man, by the finger of God, of which reaſon is the interpreter, and conſcience the judge; but moral diſtinctions are every where confounded, or obliterated, by legal artifices. The principle, which ſhould apportion the penalty to the crime, is wantonly violated, and the code of criminal juriſprudence, to the far greater part of mankind, exhibits only a black and bloody roll of penalty and proſcription. A member of parliament, whether he be lord or commoner, may ſquander in riot, gambling, and diſſipation, the property of the honeſt and induſtrious tradeſman, and may proudly beſpatter, with his carriage wheels, the man whom his extravagance has reduced to

beggary. Their ſacred perſons no rude hand of a ſheriff's officer dares to contaminate. But the ruined tradeſman, ſhould he owe the ſum of ten pounds, which the villany of his *betters* has diſabled him from paying, is unfeelingly hurried into a priſon, deprived of an opportunity of exerciſing his calling, and is ſuffered to glide into the ſilent tomb unpitied, and forgotten.

The practice of municipal law is adapted to the principle. The practice of law, which ought to be an exact diſtribution of juſtice, is only a gainful application to the little arts of chicane. The great object of all law, is to ſecure us in the enjoyment of our lives and properties. How is this effected under the preſent ſyſtem? As much money is ſpent in the atempt to obtain our right, as the thing contended for is worth; and he, who is not injured by the injuſtice of the deciſion, is frequently ruined by the delay of the ſuit. To the bulk of mankind, property is only valuable, becauſe it affords to them the means of ſubſiſtance. But if obſtructions and delays are thrown in our way of obtaining it, the great end for which property is acquired, is fruſtrated, and the relief, for which application is made to a court of judicature, cut off. Yet if life, that ſacred boon of heaven, is the ſubject of deciſion, a few hours are deemed ſufficient to determine, whether I ſhall peaceably poſſeſs, or ignominiouſly loſe it. Abſurd and prepoſterous regulation! which inverts every ſubſtantial rule of juſtice, which produces diſpatch where there ſhould be deliberation, and deliberation where there ſhould be diſpatch, and which makes the herbage of the field, and the very clod we tread upon, of more eſtimation in the eye of juſtice, than the ſacred image of the great Father of the univerſe, rational and immortal man!

This horrid perverſion could never have taken place, if the judgment ſeat had not become a ſhop of traffic; and if juſtice, which ſhould be freely diſpenſed, could not be procured at all, unleſs it were dearly purchaſed.

The law, we have been pompouſly told, is equally open to the poor and to the rich. With equal truth it might be aſſerted, that there is no act of parliament to prevent you from flying. Yet if money be the ſole inſtrument by which we are enabled either to obtain or to defend our right, he who is without wings may as well attempt to fly, as he who is without money may attempt to obtain juſtice. He has then no other alternative, than to ſit down the patient victim of the injury which he has ſuſtained, for ſhould he exert that force, with which nature has armed him, as the laſt reſource of obtaining redreſs, the dragon fangs of the law are faſtened in his vitals, and he periſhes.

To the want of an adequate repreſentation in parliament may be traced all our ſufferings, under whatever aſpect they are preſented, whether diſgrace abroad or diſtraction at home.—*Patriae et Trojae communis Erinnys.*—That government is eſſentially defective, which does not only conjoin, but even identify the intereſts of the repreſentative body with the conſtituent.—This is the only ſolid

pledge and ſecurity, that the general weal, and not partial intereſts, will be the great object of legiſlation. When the perſon employed has an intereſt different from his employer, it may naturally be ſuppoſed, that he will purſue his own, and neglect that of another man. Now all war, as it multiplies places, and encreaſes the receipts of government, (at leaſt while the war endures) extends, of courſe, the power and patronage of the miniſter, though it loads the people with additional taxes. Here, then, is a ſimple ſtatement, which proves, at once, that government, in declaring war, muſt always have an intereſt diſtinct from the people. As long as the war laſts, government has immenſe ſums to diſpoſe of, and as revenue has, hitherto, been the object of governments, the hope of making conqueſts will induce them to carry on the war, as long as the people will ſubmit to it. Every addition of territory furniſhes a new field for the collection of more taxes, every conquered diſtrict is conſidered as a new farm, and the people, who cultivate it, being regarded as ſheep, are annually brought up to be ſhorn of their fleeces.

The American war alone, were no other fact produced, would prove the neceſſity of an adequate repreſentation of the people in Parliament. The indignant voice of the nation at laſt influenced the deciſions of that aſſembly, who, in the ſame vote by which they abandoned the war, affixed, to thoſe who ſhould ſupport it, a ſcandal and reproach, which held them up as objects of execration to their country. But the injury had been committed, the miſchief was irretrievable, and the vote, therefore, which was paſſed by the commons, like the death-bed repentance of a wicked ſinner, ſerved only to cover that venal aſſembly with ſhame.

By that war, agents, commiſſaries, clerks, contractors, amaſſed immenſe ſums, while you, the people, were loaded with an additional debt of one hundred millions. If the great body of the nation had been *ſo connected with the houſe of commons*, as either to have nominated the members of that houſe, or to have had the power of recalling them when they were hunting for places and ruining their country, that nefarious war, even if it had been undertaken, could not long have endured. As ſoon as you ſaw that the conteſt was hopeleſs and ruinous, you yourſelves, ſpeaking to your ſervants in a tone of concealed authority, would inſtantly have put an end to it. Inflamed as your paſſions might have been by the inſidious artifices of intereſted ſtateſmen, who, like tygers, fatten upon human gore, adverſity would have taught you the leſſons of wiſdom. Your patient callous tempers would have been quickened into a ſenſibility, at once awful to your rulers, and ſalutary to yourſelves. Let not then inſtruction, my countrymen, which has been ſo dearly purchaſed, be purchaſed in vain.

The preſent war threatens us with evils of the ſame nature, and of deeper malignity. Your manufacturers are reduced to the melancholy alternative either of ſtarving in the ſtreets, or of taking up

the trade of ſlaughter and rapine, and of preſerving their own lives by the deſtruction of others. They ſubſiſt, not by their own induſtry, but by the miſeries of their neighbours Your ſailors are torn from their families, not to carry on or increaſe your commerce, but to prevent that intercourſe among nations, which conſtitutes the life of it. Your funds, that barometer of public credit, have fallen 20 per cent. and, upon any diſaſtrous events, which the war may produce, will ſink to ſo alarming a degree as to extinguiſh the ſmall remains of national confidence Your papers are filled with liſts of bankrupts, and many are actually ſo whoſe ſituations have never been preſented to the public eye *. Your priſons, reſounding with blaſphemous execration, ſhrieks of wretchedneſs, and diſſolute riot, are crowded with convicts, your ſtreets ſwarm with beggars putrefying with vermine and with filth, and your capital is thronged with proſtitutes, who, deprived of the ſupport of the father, the huſband, and the brother, now gone to fight the battles of government in a foreign land, are driven into the haunts of infamy and vice, with no other proſpect of terminating their miſerable career, than to rot in hoſpitals, languiſh in gaols, or periſh upon the gibbet. Of this enormous maſs of human vices and human calamities, what is the corrective, and what is the relief? Sanguinary puniſhments have been long tried, and have been tried in vain. The avenging ſword of the law may pierce the heart of man, but it does not amend it; the priſons are emptied into the grave, but the ſum of human morals remains the ſame.

In this awful ſeaſon of national calamity I ſee no other reſource, than the interpoſition of the great body of the people themſelves, electing deputies in whom they can confide, and imparting inſtructions which they muſt injoin to be executed.

The objections to this plan, I foreſee, may be two; the firſt as to its legality, the ſecond as to its utility. Theſe objections I ſhall ſeparately conſider.

The ſpirit, genius, and hiſtory of a government, which calls its free, its ancient practices, as well as poſitive ſtatutes, muſt be conſulted in caſes which are new and extraordinary. In law, as in divinity, 'the letter killeth, but the ſpirit giveth life.' If Engliſhmen had always been cooped and cabbined within the narrow limits of eſtabliſhed forms, the Revolution of 1688, which ſeated, by its conſequences, the houſe of Brunſwick on the throne, would never have been effected. When that memorable event took place, an expreſs declaration of the *public* conſent was obtained at the deſire of the prince, who, no doubt, judged it eſſential to the validity of his title A judicious expedient, ſays Hume, was fallen on for that purpoſe. All the members who had ſitten in the Houſe of Commons during any parliament of Charles the Second, were invited to meet; and to them were added the Mayor, Aldermen, and

* The author knows that a very great number of dockets were ſtruck in the commiſſioner of bankrupt's office in Sommerſet-houſe, which never appeared in the Gazette. Six ſupernumerary clerks were added to that office as ſoon as the war broke out; yet Dundas tells us, that theſe bankruptcies are a proof of our proſperity.

fifty of the Common Council. That this was far from being an adequate repreſentation of the people, every man who knows the ſtate of this country muſt admit. Yet the fact proves, which is ſufficient for my purpoſe, that our anceſtors thought themſelves authorized to act without *precedent*, and to carry a plan into execution, the good effects of which are known. It produced an *amendment* of the conſtitution. The Engliſh conſtitution, you will find, has not always been fixed. Since the Norman conqueſt, it has been gradually changing. To theſe changes we owe our liberties. Suppoſe a greater degree of liberty to be poſſible, is the ſame authority incompetent to make the changes by which ſo deſirable an object may be obtained?

This I know, that the peaceful aſſembling of men to deliberate on the beſt mode of promoting the public welfare, is no where forbidden by any poſitive ſtatute. Now whatever is not prohibited by law, is permitted by it. If the *right* of aſſembling then is lawful, the *power* of exerciſing that right is a neceſſary conſequence of it. Law, in general, being only a rule of action, conducive to public utility, whatever contributes to promote it, falls neceſſarily within the definition.

It is not fair to aſk us for the preciſe written law, which inveſts the people with this right. The non-exiſtence of ſuch a written law does not prove the non-exiſtence of the right. Many of the rights of the people depend upon cuſtom. Many of the rights of each branch of the legiſlation itſelf depend upon cuſtom. In the caſe which I am putting, the right is proved uncontradicted by any poſitive ſtatute.

Beſides, between the *expreſs* will and *permiſſive* will of Parliament, there can be no difference, when the right has been already exerciſed on one ſide, and acquieſced in on the other. A ſtronger ſenſe of right is not raiſed in the people, by a poſitive, than by a tacit, declaration of the acquieſcence of parliament. It would therefore, be as unjuſt to deſtroy a right raiſed by this tacit, as a right raiſed by any poſitive declaration.

Happily, however, the privilege which we claim, reſts not upon reaſonings of general expediency, or abſtract ſpeculations of right. Precedents of conventions, folkmotes, or meetings of the people are to be found in the early periods of our hiſtory, and are coeval with the exiſtence of our conſtitution itſelf. They were part of the Anglo-Saxon government. The Saxons convened, every year, all the free men of the kingdom who compoſed an aſſembly called Mycelgemot, Folk-mote, or Convention. It was their buſineſs and duty to *reviſe* the conduct of the king and witteñagemor, or parliament. In the golden days of Alfred, a patriot king, if ever there was one, they met on Saliſbury plain. The Mirror of Juſtice ſays, that it was their buſineſs "to take care that the people received no wrong "from the king himſelf, his queen, or their children."

The king and nobles mixed promiſcuouſly with the people in this folkmote, or convention, and were reſponſible for the exerciſe of the power entruſted to them. The people, in the times of our An-

glo-Saxon anceſtors, not only made but executed the laws of the kingdom The words *liberi homines*, or free men, deſcribed, I know, only men who held lands; and the *lazzi*, *villeins*, or ſlaves, were numerous. But perſonal ſlavery has long ceaſed in England, and the term *liberi homines*, or *free*-men, is now applicable in its ſtrict and legal acceptation to every man not incapacitated by crimes or inſanity. The Norman conqueſt planted by force that law of robbers, the tree of feudal tyranny in England, which overſhadow the goodly fabric of Anglo-Saxon juriſprudence. But though the exerciſe of the rights of the people was diſturbed for a time, they never were annihilated.

During the civil wars which frequently agitated England after the invaſion of the Normans, the reſtitution of the Saxon charter of Ina, of the charter of Edward the Confeſſor, were frequently inſiſted on, as a condition of the peace, which they granted to the ſovereign. The practices of our Saxon anceſtors, were always, in times of danger and convulſion, ſought for, as precedents to be pleaded, and examples to be imitated; and Hume well obſerves, that if Europe enjoys a larger portion of freedom than her neighbours, it is owing to the ſeeds implanted in her ſoil by thoſe generous barbarians. Theſe barbarians, however, as we have ſeen, had nothing barbarous in their policy *.

But in all caſes of emergency, THE SAFETY OF THE PEOPLE IS THE SOVEREIGN LAW. This principle, fortified by hiſtorical precedent, and ſupported by the reaſon of the thing, muſt at once anſwer the cavils of diſputacious lawyers, and the declamations of intereſted ſtateſmen—Nor is the meaſure unknown to the times in which we live. Ireland, that country, from which I boaſt my deſcent, Ireland, for which, as it has been emphatically ſaid, God has done ſo much, and man ſo little, and which has, hitherto, alas! been only a reſting place for birds of paſſage, and a banquet for birds of prey, has long ſince ſet the example of the plan which I propoſe. Was it not proved, during the courſe of the laſt ſummer, that a convention was legal, by the particular interpoſition of the parliament of Ireland to paſs a law to prevent it from meeting. Fond as thoſe *gentlemen* are of exerciſing the gainful trade of legiſlation, this pious and uſeful work, like all other pious and uſeful works of ſupererogation, would doubtleſs, have been omitted by them, had it not been juſtified by their view of the neceſſity of the meaſure. To frame a law, in order to mark as illegal any particular act, proves, more than a thouſand arguments, the lawfulneſs of the act, before the law had taken place. As the parliament of England are now in the receſs, we, my countrymen, can have no ſuch obſtruction to dread. The preſent time is the proper one, and you ought not criminally to ſuffer it to glide over. Indeed, I entertain too profound a reſpect for that venerable body of men, the parliament of England, to imagine, for a moment, that they would overleap the

* See Bacon's Hiſt. and Polit. Diſcourſes on Government; Squire's Eſſay on the Anglo-Saxon Government; and the Letters of that truly enlightened man David Williams.

barriers of a juſtifiable authority, and impede a meaſure legal in its principle, ſalutary in its effects, and calculated to ſtrengthen the foundations of government. I ſay to ſtrengthen the foundations of government, for by a movement thus regular and tranquil, its operations would be facilitated, and its dignity preſerved. Burke ranks it among public misfortunes, that the houſe of commons ſhould be wholly untouched by the opinions and feelings of the people out of doors. By this want of ſympathy, he ſays THEY WOULD CEASE TO BE A HOUSE OF COMMONS. Kings, lords, and judges, he adds, are all truſtees for the houſe of commons, becauſe no power is given for the ſole ſake of the holder *. The will of the people, Fellow Citizens, freely collected, and firmly expreſſed, would operate as a law upon thoſe truſtees of the people, who would liſten to your requeſts with no other emotion, than that of ſorrow for the neceſſity which you were laid under of making them.

Towards the cloſe of the American war, aſſociations were formed in various parts of England, either by the ſheriff ſummoning the freeholders of the county, or by the influence of noblemen and gentlemen over neighbours, inviting them to deliberate on the grievances of the nation. The late Sir George Saville, the friend of Mr Burke, was a great promoter of them, and Mr Wyvill, then the friend of Mr Pitt, was the chairman of the aſſociation which met at York They openly correſponded with other aſſociations. They met without interruption; and the lawfulneſs of their proceeding was never diſputed. The members of the houſe of commons had not then loſt the confidence of the people. Many of them aſſiſted at thoſe deliberations, the object of which was to effect a reform in parliament, and a general redreſs of grievances. The Duke of Richmond and Mr Pitt were members of another aſſociation, whoſe object was the ſame. They were joined by the acute, intrepid, and intelligent Horne Tooke, Major Cartwright, and John Froſt; the laſt of whom has been ſelected as a victim to a ſtate proſecution, becauſe the conſiſtency of *his* conduct in promoting a parliamentary reform, was a foul, though tacit reproach on the apoſtacy of thoſe, with whom he formerly acted. If precedents were neceſſary then, here they are. It is true, the union of thoſe aſſociations was not ſo cloſe and intimate, as the plan which I ſhall propoſe; but the principle was the ſame, the object was the ſame, and the legality, therefore, muſt be the ſame. Had their union been more compiete, and their ſitting more permanent, the object, for which they met, muſt certainly have been accompliſhed; and the houſe of commons would now have been, what Burke ſays, every houſe of commons ought to be "an expreſs image of the feelings of the people;" and not, what my eloquent and philoſophical friend has juſtly deſcribed it, "a "cumbrous and expenſive chamber to regiſter the edicts of the mi- "niſter †."

A public expreſſion of your wiſhes is alſo the beſt, becauſe it is the ſafeſt mode of obtaining a reform. "Take away liberty of com-

* See Thoughts on the Cauſes of the Preſent Diſcontents.
† Mackintoſh's Vindiciae Gallicae.

" plant," (ſays the wiſe Bacon) " the griefs of the ſubject will " bleed inwards: ſharp and eager humours will not evaporate, and " then they will exulcerate; AND SO MAY ENDANGER THE " SOVEREINGNTY ITSELF."

As a friend to peace, therefore, for which no ſacrifice is too dear, but the ſacrifice of freedom, let me earneſtly exhort you to adopt the meaſure.

It is to a want of this ſalutary ſtep, that I muſt attribute the indecent rejection of your petitions, during the laſt ſeſſions.

The orator of the Treaſury, whoſe only merit conſiſts " in ſpout- " ing forth a little froth ſtream upon a gaudy day," got rid of your applications, by a dexterity of manœuvre, for which he is ſo diſtinguiſhed. By ſuffering the petitions to lie upon the table, by refuſing to go into a conſideration of the grievances ſtated, he impliedly told you, that they were not even worthy of his notice. Had the contents of thoſe petitions been properly examined, he and his aſſociates muſt have been involved in this dilemma, they muſt either have come to the reſolution, that the houſe of commons is an adequate repreſentation of the people, or have afforded a redreſs to your well-grounded complaints. With the latter the arch-apoſtate was determined not to comply, and the former could never have been enrolled upon their journals, unleſs the ſacred voice of the ſenate had been made to pronounce a lie, and thoſe records, which ought to have been the eternal monuments of truth, had become the vouchers of calumny and impoſture. That the time was improper, was the miſerable excuſe under which Pitt ſheltered his conduct; an excuſe, which no man can admit, unleſs his underſtanding be ſunk below the milkineſs of infancy. Times, my friends, are but of two kinds. Either they are turbulent, or they are peacable. If turbulent, what ſo proper to allay all ferment among the people, as a ready compliance with thoſe requiſitions, which the miniſter in his days of profeſſional patriotiſm, had publickly and repeatedly declared to be juſt? If peacable, what ſo well calculated, as a compliance with their wiſhes, to perpetuate to the people the bleſſings they enjoy? All times are proper, for doing thoſe things which are proper. Our duties are perpetual and unchangeable, and fluctuate not with the variations of the ſeaſon, and the ebbings of the ocean,

FELLOW CITIZENS,

Your inadequate repreſentation in parliament has of late, undergone ſo full a diſcuſſion, that you, no doubt, are well acquainted with the ſubject. On this head, therefore, very little is neceſſary to be ſaid. By the report * of a ſociety, which calls itſelf " The " Friends of the People," it appears, that many of your *pretended* repreſentatives are ſelf created, ſelf-elected, ſelf-exiſtent; that others are the mere tools of an auſtere and inſolent ariſtocracy, of a

* See Report of the Committee, publiſhed Saturday, 9th February 1793; which earneſtly recommend to your peruſal.

corrupt treaſury junto, or of a wealthy and upſtart commoner.—By their accurate and authentic ſtatement, the people of England will ſee, that ſeventy-one peers expreſsly nominate ninety members, and, by influence, procure the return of ſeventy-ſeven, while ninety-one commoners nominate eighty-two members, and by influence procure the return of fifty-ſeven.

71 Peers and the Treaſury nominate	-	90
Procure the return of - - - - -		77
Patronage of 71 Peers and Treaſury	-	167
91 Commoners nominate - -		82
Procure the return of - - -		57
Patronage of 91 Commoners - -		139
Therefore 162 men in your country return	-	306
		out of 513 members.

Thus it is evident, that one hundred and ſixty-two men do, in effect, make laws for you, the people of England, who amount to ſix millions.

At the commencement of every ſeſſion, it is true, the following reſolution is entered on the journals, Reſolved, "that it is a high "infringement of the liberties and privileges of the commons of "Great Britain, for any lord of parliament, or any lord lieutenant "of any county, to concern themſelves in the election of members "to ſerve for the Commons in Parliament." The farce of this reſolution, indeed, is played off at the beginning of every ſeſſion, but, when we ſee men violating their own reſolutions by the very means by which they are enabled to paſs them, what ſhall we ſay, but that it is adding a mockery of your underſtandings, to a privation of your rights.

The authenticity of the ſtatement, which we have referred to, is indubitable; ſince many perſons who ſigned it are members of that very aſſembly whoſe mode of appointment they reprobate.

It is beneath the dignity of reaſon to ſtoop to a refutation of the nonſenſical jargon of virtual repreſentation, which has long been bandied about in a conſtant repercuſſion from one blockhead to another, but which has only ſtunned our ears without informing our underſtandings. Juſtice requires that men, who are only virtually repreſented ſhould only be virtually puniſhed. If the repreſentative principle be a good one, let us not be inſulted by being told, that we have it when he have it not; and if it be not a good one, let it be formally aboliſhed, and a better ſubſtituted in its ſtead. If the word repreſentation means any thing, it means adequate repreſentation; and he only is adequately repreſented who has perſonally the power

of ſending a deputy to enact laws for the government of his conduct. If a partial repreſentation be meant, let it be boldly affirmed, and we are at iſſue with our opponents; and if it be added that the good practical effects, which have flowed from ſuch a ſyſtem, are a ſufficient anſwer to all objections, I reply, that the melancholy hiſtory of the events of the laſt century, which I have briefly ſketched out to you, gives the lie to the aſſertion; which, even if it were admitted, would prove nothing, ſince the human mind is not ſuppoſed to be ſtationary in politics any more than in any other ſcience; and ſince ſociety is entitled, not only to that partial good which eſtabliſhments have hitherto produced, but to the greateſt poſſible ſum of happineſs which the ingenuity of man can deviſe, and the honeſty of man can adminiſter. That things have gone on well, as it is called, is a barefaced and an audacious falſhood; and though the aſſertion has been repeatedly made in the Houſe of Commmons, yet, like many other falſhoods, it carries with it its own refutation; for, after the melancholy experience which we have had to the contrary, there needs no ſtronger proof of the falſhood of the aſſertion than that men ſhould be ſuffered with impunity to make it.

It has been ſaid, and upon this topic what abſurdity has not been ſaid, that, though many perſons when individually conſidered, are not repreſented; yet, that the Houſe of Commons when collectively met, repreſent the whole nation; and, that they equally repreſent the towns of Birmingham and Sheffield, which ſend no deputies, as they repreſent the towns of London, Briſtol, and Liverpool, which do. In the ſame manner, does the Grand Seignior, when ſitting in divan, attended by his Viziers and Reis Effendis, repreſent the whole Turkiſh empire; in the ſame manner does he repreſent the provinces of Khurdiſtan and Thrace, the remote cities of Baſſora and Aleppo, whoſe inhabitants never had a ſingle voice in his appointment, and to whom he is only known (like other legiſlators) by his grievous exactions; while his firman, fortified by the terrors of the bow-ſtring, exacts implicit obedience, in the framing of which his ſubjects have had as great a ſhare as many of the good people of England have had in the framing of thoſe acts of parliament, which, being written in the old black letter, and never promulgated, are, with the firman of the Turk, equally difficult to be underſtood, and, with the imperial mandates of that pure vicegerent of God, equally dangerous to be reſiſted.

There are not, there cannot be, more than two ſubjects of repreſentation; perſons and property. But the preſent ſyſtem repreſents neither. Perſons are not repreſented, becauſe 5723 * perſons who are influenced, as we have ſeen, by a much ſmaller number, return a majority of the Houſe of Commons, though the adult males throughout Great Britain, amount to 1,250,000 †. Property is not repreſented, for the county of Cornwall, one of the pooreſt in the 52, ſends 45 members to Parliament, while the county of Middleſex,

* See Burgh's Political Diſquiſitions, vol. I.

† See the ſame author.

which contains the greater part of the wealth of the kingdom, ſends only eight. In ſome boroughs, the man who boils a pot, has the privilege of voting for a member of parliament; though he who poſſeſſes a hundred thouſand pounds in the funds, has not.

Is this, my countrymen, the repreſentation of which you boaſt? Is this the happy conſtitution, which it is inſanity not to admire, and againſt which it is blaſphemy to ſpeak?

The boroughs of Gatton and old Sarum, though ſcarcely the veſtige of a town remains, ſend as many members as the city of London, that mart of induſtry and wealth. The rank graſs, emblematical of their ſtate, now grows, in thoſe deſolate and abandoned places, and their ſole manufacture, as Burke has well obſerved, is in members of parliament. Yet four reſpectable gentlemen repreſent their departed greatneſs, as the knights of a coronation repreſent the duchies of Normandy and Aquitaine.

From this want of conjunction of the intereſts of the people and the parliament, the faireſt fruit of freedom is blighted. The tree of liberty can never flouriſh, unleſs its roots ſtrike deep into the ſoil of univerſal ſuffrage. The rotten branches which not only wither its beauty, but exhauſt its ſap, ſhould therefore be lopt off, and a free and vivifying repreſentation ſhould be engrafted in their place. *Inutiles ramos amputans, felioiores inſerit.*

I am aware, Fellow Citizens, that every artifice, which miniſterial and factious cunning can deviſe, will be played off upon your underſtandings, to prevent a convention, that only mode of national ſalvation. The ghoſt of inſurrections, which, during the laſt winter, the ſorcerer of the treaſury too ſucceſsfully evoked, may be again conjured up from its peaceful grave, to intimidate you from a ſpirited aſſertion of your rights. You were then apalled by terrors, from which even the timidity of a Laplander would diſdain to have ſhrunk. The deluſion, indeed, has ceaſed, but the ſhame of having been the bubbles and the victims of it, ſtill adheres to you. But, if it exiſts for your ſhame, let it alſo exiſt for your inſtruction, and beware that you are not deterred from the performance of your duty by the ſtale incantations of that pompous magician.

In truth, no man laughed more than the miniſter himſelf at the eaſineſs of your credulity; who, when the farce was over, might have addreſſed you in the language of Grizzle to queen Dollalola.

> I tell you, Madam, it is all a trick,
> I made the giants firſt, and then I killed them.
>
> Tragedy of Tom Thumb.

But this panic, had it continued much longer, would have been as deſtructive in its conſequences, as it was groundleſs in its cauſe. A general ſpirit of diſtruſt pervaded all ranks and deſcriptions of men. Inſurrections, which were every where to be heard of, and no where to be ſeen, created an alarm the more terrifying in its nature, as they were muffled up in the darkneſs and myſtery

of incertitude. A ſyſtem of *eſpionage* was eſtabliſhed, and ſanctioned by the countenance of government. Magiſtrates proſtituted their ſacred functions, and ſcrupled not to retrieve their bankrupt fortunes, by receiving from the treaſury the wages of corruption, which were to be the price of the honour and integrity of their office. The bands of friendſhip were diſſolved, the blood of wholſome kindred was infected, and confidence, the great cement of civil ſociety, was in danger of being utterly extinguiſhed among men.

Nor was this all. A civil inquiſition was erected over the conſciences of men, and a deſpicable hireling of government became the modern Saint Dominic, the grand inquiſitor to preſide at the tribunal. The cry of church and king, which had, before, been the Shibboleth of the incendiaries of Birmingham, became the warhoop of the faction, and reſounded through the nation; and theſe words were meant to convey, not the benignant doctrines of the meek and gentle Jeſus, nor a magiſtrate whoſe authority was limited by his duties, but a church without the goſpel, and a king above the law *.

I ſhall, now, lay before you the following plan of a convention. By this plan it will appear, that the *majority of wills*, will be, as it ought to be, the legitimate rule of government; as the negative of the crown will never be exerciſed in oppoſition to the declared ſenſe of the nation. Such was the government of our Saxon anceſtors, when they met, every year, in their folk-mote, or convention, The plan propoſed, therefore, is not a breach, but a renovation of our conſtitution. I need not be told, that a majority of wills and *right* are not convertible terms. This, I know, has been aſſerted in the houſe of commons, (and much ſtreſs has been laid upon it) by a man, who marſhals his words by the diſcipline of logic, though he invigorates not his mind with the principles of wiſdom. Yet to that man I would anſwer, that though a majority of wills is not infallible, and therefore may ſometimes produce, in government, a violation of *right*, yet it is the beſt mode of aſcertaining *right* which human ingenuity can deviſe; for the queſtion will perpetually recur, who are the beſt judges of the proper mode of conducting their own affairs. No particular ſet of men hold any charter of exemption from the frailties of human nature, and therefore, the people, if they are not governed by a majority of their own wills, can have no other alternative, than to be governed by *force*. In vain will you attempt to perſuade them, that the meaſures, which you *compel* them to adopt, are more ſuitable to their intereſts, than the meaſures which are the ſuggeſtions of their own underſtandings.—They will tell you, that happineſs depends upon opinion, which object government is only inſtituted to procure; that government is a practical good, not an abſtract ſpeculation, and thoſe meaſures therefore, muſt of neceſſity be the beſt, which the majority of the people have determined to be ſo. To this what anſwer can be given, but that the people are ignorant of their real intereſts, (a fact of which you will

* Such were the expreſſions of the beſt and wiſeſt divine whom the church of England now holds. I need ſcarcely name THAT MAN, my much loved and much honoured preceptor Samuel Parr.

not perſuade them) and that their governors have their welfare more nearly at heart, than the people themſelves?—If you ſubmit to their reaſonings, you concede the point, for which the people contend; and, if you do not, and, ſhould they ſpurn at your decrees, in order to render your government effectual, your parchment laws, muſt be carried into execution, either by the aid, or the terror of the bayonet, and however you may dignify the ſyſtem of your rule by epithets which your vanity, not your wiſdom has applied, it is in fact, and in reality, the ſword that governs.—Self-elected ſenators, in the plenitude of illicit power, may iſſue their mandates, and call them a code of juſtice, but reaſon will determine, that, if they are not repreſentatives, they muſt be robbers.

In the plan which I ſhall offer, it will alſo be found, that perſons, not property, are the objects of repreſentation. Matter cannot feel, but man can. Life is the gift of God, of which no man ſhould be deprived, but by the operation of a law, to which his will has conſented, and which his reaſon comprehends. He who forfeits life by any other means, may indeed fall by the formalities, but he ſuffers, in his perſon, a violation of juſtice.

With reſpect to property, I muſt obſerve, that the word has hitherto been uſed in a ſenſe too looſe and indefinite. Property is that, which he who poſſeſſes, poſſeſſes alone, peculiarly, and excluſively. *Proprietas eſt id, quod ſibi* proprium *eſt.* In this true and proper acceptation of the word, property is not merely, the land which we inherit, or the money which we poſſeſs, but all thoſe means both of mind, and of body, by which we are enabled to acquire the bleſſings of life. In this ſenſe, the manual labour of the peaſant, the ingenuity of the artiſt, the talents of the ſcholar, are the property of each; and the exerciſe of theſe being the means of their livelihood and convenience, are the ſources of their happineſs, and fit objects of protection. He who enjoys a comfortable income from the earnings of his induſtry, is equally a man of property, with him, who, by the partial regulations of ſociety, inherits it from his anceſtors.

The earnings of the labourer, the tradeſman, and manufacturer, are, in many caſes, and the productions of men of learning, and of ſcience, are, in all caſes, regulated, by the power of parliament. Property alone, even in the looſe and popular uſage of the term, can, never, in the eye of reaſon and of virtue, be an object of reſpect, ſince it may be as well poſſeſſed by the infamous Chartres, as by the Man of Roſs. In no caſe, likewiſe, does it conſtitute a reaſonable object of deſire, but as it adminiſters to the innocent gratification of him, who poſſeſſes it.—If wealth be ſought after not as a mean, but as an end, the purſuit, however ſanctified by the term of induſtry, not only becomes a vice, but engenders the extirpation of all virtue.—Avarice is a paſſion, of ſo cold, and blighting a nature, that it is generally the ſolitary tenant of whatever boſom it inhabits.—Like the great poiſonous tree of Java, it is environed only by drearineſs and deſolation, and ſuffers no virtue to bloſſom around it.

But to return.—

Perſons, then, we find, Fellow Citizens, are the only objects of repreſentation; for perſons and property are, in fact, ſo indiſſolubly connected, that if all perſons are not repreſented, all property cannot be. The poor are, as frequently as the rich, parties to contracts, which regulate the mode, in which property ſhall paſs from one party to the other; and their property, when acquired, is equally ſubject to regulation, and ſometimes to forfeiture, by the operation of law. The great body of the people, who in all countries are not the rich, are equally bound by duty, and inſtigated by feeling, to afford protection to their wives, ſiſters, and daughters, againſt brutal luſt and violence, and therefore are as much intereſted in thoſe laws that regulate marriage, which is the parent of thoſe connections.—After all, the people are the only fountain of power, and the great ſource of *revenue*; it is the people, who fight your battles in time of war, and cultivate your fields in time of peace, and therefore ſhould be conſulted in the creation of *civil* liberty, which is the reſult of laws defining the boundaries of mens actions, as citizens of the ſame community, and leaving them free within thoſe boundaries; but for the permanent enjoyment of which, however, they have no ſecurity, unleſs they alſo poſſeſs *political* liberty, which is the only power of appointing perſons to tranſact the public buſineſs, and the power of diſmiſſion, when they violate the truſt repoſed in them.

Nor need we dread the conſequences of an improper uſe, or exerciſe of this power. If the people are right, the common force will be exerted for the common good; and if wrong, a ſenſe of ſelf-preſervation from thoſe evils, which their conduct has produced, will operate as a corrective of the errors into which they have fallen.

PLAN OF CONVENTION.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PRIMARY ASSEMBLIES, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ELECTING DEPUTIES.

First, In each primary aſſembly, a particular liſt ſhall be made of the citizens who compoſe it.

Second, The number of deputies to meet in the convention, from England and Scotland, may be 375; that is to ſay, 250 from England, and 125 from Scotland.

Third, As the number of adult males, all of whom, on our preſent plan, are electors, amount in England to 1,250,000, they may be divided into 1250 primary aſſemblies: each pariſh containing one primary aſſembly, which ſhall have a right to chooſe ten electors.

Fourth, Let the ten electors, ſo choſen from the one tenth of an intermediate body of electors, or ſecondary aſſembly, which ſhall be compoſed of ten neighbouring pariſhes †. This intervention of a ſecondary aſſembly, while it collects the public will, in the complet-

† As men, not bricks and ſtones, are the proper objects of legiſlation, population, not property, is the baſis of our plan. To effect this, a new diviſion of pariſhes is here ſuppoſed.

eſt manner, ſecures, at the ſame time, the elections for deputies from thoſe tumults and diſorders, which ſometimes accompany large meetings of the people.

Fifth, The ſecondary aſſembly ſo met to proceed to the choice of two deputies to be ſent to the convention.

Sixth, The proportion of the primary electors to that of the deputies will be as 1 to 5000. All the primary aſſemblies collectively will then ſend 250 deputies; the population of England alone being eſtimated at ſix millions, if to theſe 250 Engliſh deputies we add 125 from Scotland elected in the ſame manner, and whoſe population may be eſtimated at three millions, the whole convention will form a body of 375 members to deliberate for the welfare of both countries.

OF THE STATE OF THE VOTERS, AND OF THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR THE EXERCISE OF THEIR RIGHTS.

1ſt. Every man of the age of 21, who is neither a criminal, an idiot, nor a lunatic, has a right of voting.

2d. No man is to be deemed a criminal unleſs convicted of the charge alleged by a jury of twelve men, the bill having been previouſly found by a grand jury.

3d. No man ſhould be conſidered as an idiot, or a lunatic, unleſs the fact has been judicially aſcertained in open court, and a regular certificate of ſuch fact be produced to the perſon authorized to receive the votes.

4th. No perſon to be permitted to exerciſe his right of voting in more than one primary aſſembly.

5th. A reſidence of three months ſhould be deemed neceſſary to enable any man to vote in his primary aſſembly.

6th. But as no man ſhould be deprived of the power of voting, unleſs, as before obſerved, he laboured under the misfortune of idiotcy or lunacy, or had been convicted of a crime; ſo his not having reſided three months in that particular pariſh, wherein he may live at the period of election, ſhall not extinguiſh his right of voting altogether; but he ſhall be permitted to vote in the pariſh where laſt he reſided for the ſpace of time abovementioned.

7th. Every man ſhall be deemed eligible as a deputy either to the ſecondary aſſembly or to the convention, unleſs he be an idiot, lunatic, or one convicted of a crime, by the deciſions of a grand and a petty jury.

8th. All perſons eligible may be choſen by the electors of any places, even though he be not a member of that pariſh or primary aſſembly.

From this plan the following good effect will enſue;

Firſt, The people will enjoy not only *civil* liberty, but *political* liberty; that is to ſay, they will not only *be* free, but have the power of *keeping* themſelves ſo.

Second, The deputies being bound to ſpeak the ſenſe of their conſtituents, will be really their *repreſentatives*. Corruption will be cut up by the roots, as no equivalent can be given to a whole nation for their happineſs.

Third, The deputies being liable to be recalled whenever they act contrary to the will of their conſtituents, a conſtant ſenſe of their

dependence will keep them ſteady in the purſuit of the object, for the attainment of which they were ſent. Impeachment of the public ſervants, a meaſure which obſtructs public buſineſs, and creates ill blood, will then be rendered unneceſſary, as it has already been found ineffectual; ſince it only puniſhes crimes, but does not prevent them.

Fourth, War that greateſt of human evils, will, in all probability, ceaſe, as the people, who at all times have borne the burden of carrying it on, will then be conſulted on the propriety of making it. The term glory, which is only to be found in the jargon of courts, and not in the language of reaſon, will be aboliſhed; and man, awakened at laſt to a ſenſe of his real intereſt, will find that the pain of ſuffering evil is greater than the pleaſure of inflicting it.

Fifth, Contentment with our ſituation, as far as is conſiſtent with the condition of our being, would take place, ſince no one could with propriety complain of being puniſhed for the breach of that law, to the making of which, he himſelf had conſented.

Sixth, Puniſhments would be, in great meaſure rendered unneceſſary, as the temptation to commit crimes would be leſſened; and every man would feel a pride in obeying thoſe laws, which he had contributed to enact.

Seventh, Ignorance, the parent of vice, would be ſoon deſtroyed; as all men being trained to public buſineſs, would have their underſtandings enlightened upon the duties which they were bound to perform.

Eighth, The broadeſt as well as deepeſt foundation of public happineſs would be laid. Every man then not only being eligible by law, but ſtanding an equal chance of filling the offices of the ſtate, the wideſt field would be opened for a diſplay of thoſe talents and virtues which produce ſatisfaction to the individual, and benefit to the country.

And laſtly, The poor who are now worked too hard, and taught too little, would have their perſons better protected, their labour better rewarded, and their minds better inſtructed; and that claſs of men, the extremely indigent, would ſoon ceaſe to exiſt; who, as they are now excluded from the benefits of ſociety, are of courſe intereſted, and are too often employed, in promoting its diſturbance,

In the appointment of your repreſentatives, I would recommend it to you to chooſe men like yourſelves of plain manners, and ſimple lives; who can have no other object than the intereſt of the people; who have never been corrupted by the habits of holding places, or expecting them; and who have neither promoted the views of a domineering ariſtocracy, nor breathed the contagious air of a court. The hiſtory of parties, ſince the revolution, is only a hiſtory of the ſtruggles for power and emolument, and muſt ultimately convince a deluded nation, that the one is only eager to get, what the other is as anxious to keep.

High ſounding words about liberty, and pompous and long-winded ſpeeches, if they do not acompany a diminution of public taxes, and an abolition of ſinecure places and penſions, are only

traps to enſnare. The ſacred name of religion has formerly been uſed as the mantle of perſecution. The hiſtory of the preſent day muſt likewiſe convince you, that civil polity has its hereſies, as well as divinity, and that the altars of freedom, though approached with the ſanctimonious pretence of reverence and adoration, may be equally profaned with the temples of religion.—If the oppoſition, during the laſt ſeſſion, had manfully ſeceded from a parliament, where they only ſerved to diſplay the inefficacy of their efforts, and, had left the miniſter to run his full career of madneſs and iniquity, they might have opened the eyes of the people, who would then have ſeen, that parliament is no check upon the determinations of the cabinet. If, inſtead of nibbling at particular clauſes of acts of parliament, with the loquacious dexterity of barriſters if inſtead of criminating the miniſter for a feeble proſecution of the war, they had boldly refuſed to concur in a vote of ſupplies, of which the object is to extinguiſh the liberties of Europe, they would have been juſtly entitled to the confidence of their country. Upon this confidence, however, they can have now no claim.† If I periſh by the ſword of the aſſaſſin, is it any alleviation of my ſufferings, that the weapon is forged or ſharpened by thoſe, who, with hollow profeſſion of friendſhip in their mouths, embrue their hands in my innocent blood? If any thing can leſſen our abhorrence of an action miſchievous to ſociety, it can only be our conviction of the ſincerity of the agent. But, what ſhall we think of thoſe, who ſtigmatize war as murder, yet join with the band of national aſſaſſins; who reprobate it as robbery, yet unfeelingly drain the purſe, of the peaſant to ſupport it? What is this, but to be voluntary partakers of the great compact of depravity, and to contribute means to accompliſh an end, which they themſelves pronounce to be wicked?

Before I conclude, I ſhall lay before you, the opinion of ſeveral members of that branch of the legiſlature, on the ſubject of aſſociations, which will not be accuſed, I apprehend, of being likely to diſſeminate among the people, the principles of ſedition. The name of Camden will be found among them, whoſe authority as a lawyer is reputed the firſt in the kingdom, and who is now preſident of his Majeſty's Council. The name of Richmond will be found among them, who is alſo a Member of the Council, and the name of Nugent Temple, now Marquis of Buckingham, and the couſin of Pitt, will likewiſe appear among them, who ſince that period, has enjoyed the viceroyalty of Ireland, the higheſt poſt, both as to dignity and emolument, which the power of the crown can confer upon a ſubject; who poſſeſſed, becauſe he, no doubt, was entitled to the confidence of his ſovereign, and who cannot, therefore, be ſuppoſed to harbour, in the remoteſt degree, any principles deſtructive of the peace of his country.

† From among theſe, I muſt however except Sheridan, whoſe rich and copious talents I admire; whom, for his manly and avowed hatred of the coalition, I revere and who, unconnected with ariſtocratic families, and untainted by ariſtocratic principles, has, I ſincerely believe, at heart, the welfare, and therefore merits the confidence of the people.

Diſſentient. "We are farther impelled to preſs this motion, becauſe "the object of it has been ſeconded and called for by a conſiderable "majority of the people, who are aſſociating for this purpoſe, and "ſeem determined to purſue it, by every legal and conſtitutional "method that can be diviſed for its ſucceſs; and however ſome may "affect to be alarmed, as if ſuch aſſociations tended to diſturb the "peace, or encroach upon the delegated power of the other houſe, "we are perſuaded they have no other view but to collect the "ſenſe of the people, and to inform the whole body of the repreſenta-"tives, what are the ſentiments of the whole body of the conſtituents, "in which reſpect their proceedings have been peaceably, orderly, "and *conſtitutional*. And if it be aſked, what farther is to be done, "if theſe petitions are rejected? The beſt anſwer is, that the caſe "cannot be ſuppoſed; for although upon a few ſeparate petitions it "may be fairly ſaid, that the other houſe ought not to be decided by "a part only of their conſtituents, yet it cannot be preſumed they "will act in defiance of the united opinion of the whole people, or "indeed of any great and notorious majority. It is admitted they "have a power to vote as they think fit; but it is not poſſible to "conceive that ſo wiſe an aſſembly will ever be raſh enough to re-"ject ſuch petitions, and by thoſe means cauſe this dangerous queſtion "to be broached and agitated, WHETHER THEY HAVE NOT "BROKE THEIR TRUST?——The voice of the people will "certianly be complied with."

[Note, This Proteſt was ſigned by 33 of what are called Peers, moſt of whom have deſerted their principles, and joined the miniſterial phalanx, as apoſtates to Freedom, their names are well known to the people, as being the oppreſſors of their country.]

FRIENDS, COUNTRYMEN, AND FELLOW CITIZENS!

Theſe truths have I laid before you, with all boldneſs, ſimplicity, and zeal. I am one of you, and therefore neither have, nor can have, an intereſt diſtinct from yours. If I have held up to you a gloomy picture of your ſituation, it is no more than the circumſtances of the times ſufficiently warrant. The remedy is in your own hands, and if you do not apply it, you will have only yourſelves to blame for the ruin which muſt follow. Whatever be the fate of this work, whether it be ſuffered to moulder in neglect, or expoſe me to the rage of calumny and perſecution, I ſhall reſt my head on this pillow of conſolation; that it was the effort of a man whoſe intentions were good. I am haſtening to the meridian of life, and, in a few years, muſt be numbered among the ſilent dead. I ſee, and I ſee too with a joy which no tyranny can depreſs, the rapid improvement of the condition of man. If the good which this work was intended to produce be immediate, I have my reward; and if remote, I ſhall cherish in my breaſt the pleaſing reflection that you will perhaps call to mind, with ſome degree of tenderneſs, when he is no more a man, "who contributed his mite to carry on ſo good a work, and who earneſtly ſought, by expoſing vice, inſtructing ignorance, and ſolacing wretchedneſs, to produce the regeneration of our common country.

FINIS.

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